

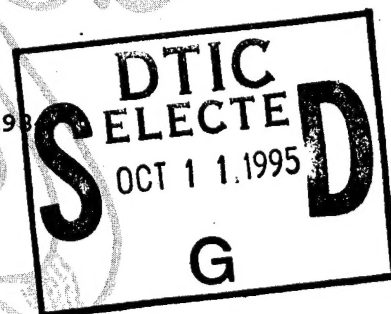
**THE EFFECT OF U.S. COUNTER-DRUG EFFORTS
ON THE ECUADORIAN-COLOMBIAN
BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP**

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the United
States Army Command and General Staff College in
partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

by

**MAJOR JOHN T. McNAMARA, U.S. ARMY
B.S. United States Military Academy, 1988**



FORT LEAVENWORTH, KANSAS

1995

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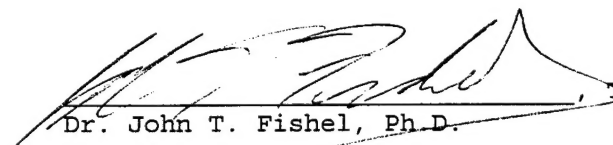
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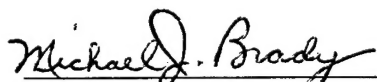
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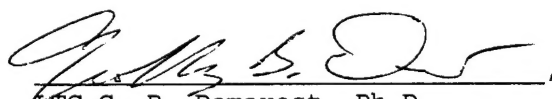
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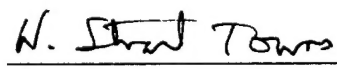
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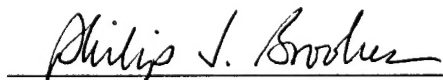
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ABSTRACT

The Effect of U.S. Counter-Drug Efforts on the Ecuadorian-Colombian Bilateral Relationship, by Major John T. McNamara, U.S. Army, 85 pages.

This study investigates the effect of the U.S.-sponsored Counter-Drug effort of the 1980s and 1990s on the bilateral relationship between the neighboring South American Republics of Ecuador and Colombia. The historical U.S.-Ecuadorian-Colombian relationship is initially traced from the early 1800s to the late 1970s, in order to establish the historical band within which these countries' relations normally fluctuated. The study next discusses the arrival of the cocaine phenomenon, beginning in the early 1980s, and describes the various strategies adopted by these three states to confront the perceived threat posed to their national interests by the violence and drug abuse associated with this international problem. By analyzing the components of U.S. Counter-Drug initiatives over the last two decades and revealing their impact on the pre-existing levels of diplomatic, economic, and military relations between Ecuador and Colombia, the study demonstrates that U.S. Counter-Drug efforts have had a generally positive impact on the traditional Ecuadorian-Colombian bilateral relationship.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The United States has engaged in a foreign policy towards Latin America that has alternated between disinterest and unwanted intervention for over 150 years. While the U.S. has conducted its affairs with its own interests in mind, the Latin American countries have likewise developed regional links to augment their strong economic, political, and cultural ties with the Colossus of the North. The South American Republics of Ecuador and Colombia are two countries that have maintained generally close ties to one another since their independence from Spain in the early nineteenth century. These two countries are heavily involved in collaborating with the U.S. in the on-going effort to interdict illegal drugs produced and refined in Latin America to meet the demand in the U.S. and other industrialized nations. The dynamic effect of the magnitude and focus of U.S. counter-drug (CD) assistance to these two countries may well alter the relationships of all three protagonists in the future, regardless of the eventual outcome of the current "Drug War." This study's ultimate goal is to determine the extent to which the U.S.-sponsored CD effort in Latin America is either enhancing or detracting from the bilateral relations between the neighboring Republics of Ecuador and Colombia.

Chapter one will describe this study and will discuss the research methodology and literature review portions of this analysis.

The research methodology, its application to this particular study, and the conclusions which may be drawn from this method will all be discussed in this chapter. This chapter will then conclude with a literature review relating to this research topic. This review will discuss the sources already consulted, as well as potential supplemental sources which may be valuable to future research efforts.

Chapter two will initially survey the historical interaction between Ecuador and Colombia, beginning with their common colonial heritage. By examining the roles played by these two parties toward one another over the course of more than two centuries, an accurate baseline will be established against which any on-going or projected changes in their bilateral relations can then be measured. The second major element of chapter two will be a historical review of U.S.-Ecuadorian and U.S.-Colombian relations, within the context of overall U.S.-Latin American historical relations. This survey will be important since it will also establish a benchmark against which current U.S. CD-related efforts can then be contrasted.

Chapter three will be dedicated to tracing the rise of the drug abuse/business phenomenon and documenting U.S., Ecuadorian, and Colombian efforts to combat these threats. This examination will cover both the nature of the U.S. addiction and the actual roles played by Ecuador and Colombia in the production, refining, and transportation of Latin America's growth industry of the 1980s and 1990s. By detailing these aspects of the drug problem and their effects on the involved nations, the stage will be set for the discussion of the CD efforts of the U.S., Ecuador, and Colombia. The final portion of this chapter will

focus on the actual programs designed and implemented, often under U.S. sponsorship, to combat the current drug epidemic emanating from Latin America. The wide variety of U.S. Country Team programs occurring in Ecuador and Colombia will be examined to determine the extent to which they improve, harm, or have no significant effect on the bilateral relations between Ecuador and Colombia.

Finally, chapter four will consist of an overall analysis of the effect of the U.S.-sponsored CD effort on the state of bilateral relations between Ecuador and Colombia.

Hypothesis. The U.S.-sponsored CD efforts in Latin America are having a positive effect on bilateral relations between Ecuador and Colombia.

Significance of the Study. The drug scourge currently occurring in Latin America, although serious, is just the most recent in a series of challenges that Latin America and the United States have faced during their respective histories. Long after the resolution of the on-going "Drug War," the United States will continue to have important national interests in Latin America by virtue of our proximity to one another, Latin America's geographical location adjacent to the Panama Canal, the increasing importance of Latin American raw materials (e.g., petroleum) to the U.S. economy, the value of Latin America as a market for U.S. products, and the rising percentage of U.S. citizens of Latin American heritage.

The Ecuadorian-Colombian relationship, in particular, has been a special one since they both emerged from the yoke of Spanish colonialism almost two hundred years ago. Current U.S. CD initiatives

which support or enhance this traditionally strong Ecuadorian-Colombian bond simultaneously promote important U.S. interests, such as regional economic integration and cooperative security arrangements among our friends. Therefore, U.S. bilateral, and, when appropriate, multi-lateral/regional approaches to the CD effort could conceivably serve to both foster more efficient regional CD endeavors and enhance U.S. security and trade interests throughout the region. Conversely, any significant injury to regional bilateral relations, such as those of Ecuador and Colombia, due to divisive or uncoordinated United States government CD efforts, could logically have negative repercussions on these important U.S. interests in the region.

Key Terms. Two terms must be defined in order to avoid confusion or misconceptions during this study. The first term is "relations." For the purpose of this thesis, the term "relations" will be defined as the sum total of all diplomatic, economic, and military interactions between two or more states. The second term that requires a clear definition is "counter-drug (CD) operations." CD operations, within the context of this study, are defined as the overall inter-agency and multinational effort to eliminate the production of illicit drugs, interdict, and prevent the transshipment of these drugs and reduce the international demand for these drugs.

Limitation. The one major limitation that will impact on this thesis is the decision to limit research to unclassified sources. The absence of currently classified information should not significantly detract from this thesis due to the broad character of this trend-related study and the fact that much of the U.S. government

classification of documents related to CD activities are purely force-protection driven, which generally leads to immediate release of general information and mission results upon completion of the particular operation. This publication of successful results is often an attempt to gain political support for additional funding and authorization for future operations. Therefore, sufficient current public information on the prosecution of CD operations should be readily available to accomplish this study.

Delimitation. Although a general survey of U.S.-Latin American relations (with emphasis on Ecuador and Colombia) and Ecuadorian-Colombian bilateral relations will span several hundred years, this review is designed as an overview. The purpose of the historical review is to merely serve as a backdrop or point of departure against which more recent events can then be analyzed. The real heart of this study will focus on those changes that the U.S.-sponsored CD effort has brought to the historical relationships of the above-named countries. Accordingly, the period from the 1980s to the present will receive greater focus in this thesis. A second delimitation will be to reserve judgment on the overall effectiveness of the "Drug War" as a whole. This study will, of course, examine the components of CD operations being conducted in Ecuador and Colombia. The purpose of this thesis, however, is to use the "Drug War" merely as a vehicle to assess trends within the bilateral relations of Ecuador and Colombia--not to grade the overall effectiveness of the U.S. CD effort throughout Latin America.

Research Methodology. This study will seek to disprove or support its primary hypothesis: that the U.S.-sponsored CD effort has

resulted in increasingly positive bilateral relations between Ecuador and Colombia. A supporting corollary to this initial hypothesis will be that, should a definitive improvement in bilateral Ecuadorian-Colombian relations be established, a clear link to the U.S.-initiated CD activities can also be identified. The research method that this study will use to evaluate these hypotheses will be a combined historical/comparative approach.

The first step in this research will be the establishment of the historical band within which the relations between Ecuador and Colombia normally fluctuated throughout their respective histories. By documenting evidence such as the origins of the modern states of Ecuador and Colombia, historical alliances between the two nations, and their degree of development of bilateral trade/economic integration, a normal pattern of bilateral relations should be discernible. This standard of typical Ecuadorian-Colombian relations will be used as the benchmark against which current bilateral relations can be measured.

The next step in this research will be to describe the dramatic rise of cocaine-related challenges during the last twenty years, with particular emphasis on the very different roles played by Ecuador, Colombia, and the U.S. with respect to this illicit activity. Upon presenting the threat posed by the drug scourge and each country's particular circumstances regarding this phenomenon, this study will describe the CD efforts made by all three countries, generally as part of the U.S.-encouraged campaign, to combat the narco-trafficking menace. During this detailed review of the CD interactions of the U.S., Ecuador,

and Colombia, indicators of enhanced, steady, or reduced levels of Ecuadorian-Colombian bilateral relations should begin to emerge.

Finally, after establishing both the historical band of Ecuadorian-Colombian relations and describing the changes to these relations witnessed over the course of the last two decades, this study will analyze the degree to which Ecuadorian-Colombian bilateral relations, specifically in the areas of diplomacy, economics, and military cooperation, have been positively or negatively affected by the U.S.-sponsored CD effort. The results from this comparative analysis will demonstrate the positive, negligible, or negative effect that the U.S.-led CD effort has had on the traditional bilateral relations between Ecuador and Colombia.

In the event that the research process reveals evidence suggesting that the U.S. CD efforts have, in fact, harmed the diplomatic, economic, or military links between Ecuador and Colombia, the study's overall hypothesis will be invalid. For instance, within the diplomatic arena, a reduction in the levels of traditional Ecuadorian-Colombian diplomatic relations would indicate that perhaps U.S.-initiated CD efforts were placing undue stress on the bilateral Ecuadorian-Colombian relationship. A disengagement and distancing of the economies of Ecuador and Colombia away from established patterns of economic integration would similarly cast doubt on the study's overall hypothesis, since the U.S. CD efforts might well be responsible for this trend reversal. A deterioration in the military relations between the historically cooperative military forces of Ecuador and Colombia during

this recent period would likewise jeopardize the validity of the study's hypothesis.

The discovery of evidence supporting the study's hypothesis, on the other hand, would tend to validate the overall hypothesis. The confirmation of positive changes in the fields of diplomacy, economic relations, and military cooperation between Ecuador and Colombia, if positively linked to U.S. CD initiatives, would serve to support the study's hypothesis. Some examples of these "positive changes" would be increased levels of diplomatic cooperation, agreements resulting in greater bilateral economic integration, and a rise in the frequency of military contacts and exercises between these two neighbors.

The third possible outcome of this study would be the determination that the U.S.-initiated CD effort is having no measurable effect on the Ecuadorian-Colombian bilateral relationship. Should the study ascertain that the traditional diplomatic, economic, and military interactions between Ecuador and Colombia are continuing at established historical levels, with no significant deviations during the last twenty years, the study's conclusion would be that the recent U.S. CD policies did not have any discernable impact on the established Ecuadorian-Colombian relationship.

Literature Review. This study required researching historical information concerning three different countries over a long period of time (more than 150 years), and then contrasting that research product with more detailed investigation of current developments involving those same nations. The breadth of this study and its inherent requirement

for specific, accurate data necessitated accessing a wide variety of official, scholarly, and news media sources.

The research involving the historical relations among the U.S., Ecuador, and Colombia focused on integrating official U.S. government records and well-recognized scholarly works on Latin America to weave a pattern of traditional activity between the three actors over the last century and a half. The primary government records consulted during this phase of the research were the U.S. Department of State's Foreign Relations of the United States, the U.S. Congressional Information Series, and the Library of Congress' Area Handbook Series. The Department of State's series provided verbatim accounts of diplomatic notes, memorandums, and other unadulterated correspondence between U.S. officials and foreign governments and offered a unique, unbiased account of historical events. The U.S. Congressional Series similarly recorded official resolutions, correspondence, and hearings which further amplified developments within the U.S. government on issues relating to this thesis. Perhaps the most comprehensive government publication available on a country-by-country basis, the Area Handbook series provided a well-rounded account of the history and development of each subject country, although the series can not be considered an entirely unbiased source of information, since it is an official USG publication. The final critical source to this period of research consisted of introductory scholarly texts, such as Latin American Politics and Development (edited by Howard J. Wiarda and Harvey F. Kline) and Latin America--Its Problems and Its Promise (edited by Jan Knippers Black) which, along with other, more country specific works, provided a well-

rounded interpretation of the events already documented in the U.S. government-produced references.¹

The next phase of the research involved a much more focused approach to developments, especially CD-related developments, among these three nations over the last twenty years. The sources consulted during this phase of the research differed considerably from those of the preceding section. Some USG-produced documents were applicable to this more recent period, but a great deal of timely material was also available from recently published scholarship, news reports, and interviews with the actual participants of recent and ongoing events relating to this subject.

The government documents consulted relating to this recent period included the White House-produced National Security Strategy and National Drug Control Strategy series, the Department of State and Defense Security Assistance Agency-produced Congressional Presentation for Security Assistance Programs series, and additional information from the History of the United States and Area Handbook series (discussed earlier). Both the National Security Strategy and National Drug Control Strategy provided important insights into the assessment by recent administrations of CD policy issues, and were critical to examining the subject, but should be considered as somewhat political messages that have a tendency to be very optimistic in both their evaluation of current programs and forecasts for future effectiveness. The Congressional Presentation for Security Assistance Programs series, although primarily a program management tool, also has a propensity to

view their ongoing or requested programs in a very favorable light, perhaps out of necessity to ensure continued funding.

The scholarly works relating to this most recent period reflect the variety of views on recent U.S.-initiatives to confront the narcotics threat, at both home and abroad. The recent literature reviews of the overall CD effort range from utter despair, such as "Dope and Dogma: Explaining the Failure of U.S.-LATAM Drug Policies" (by Bruce Bagley and Juan Tokatlian) in The United States and Latin America in the 1990s to Georges Fauriol's more balanced view of an improving, maturing CD process in Evolving U.S. Strategy for Latin America and the Caribbean. Interestingly enough, no scholarly works encountered during this study proved to be as overall optimistic as the above-mentioned U.S. government documents concerning the success of the U.S.-led hemispheric CD effort. This thesis, by means of its tracing of the development of the evolving U.S. CD strategy, may provide a partial answer to this difference of opinion between USG and non-USG sources concerning the effectiveness of U.S. CD efforts in Latin America.

Another valuable source examined during this study involved news articles, published both in the U.S. and Latin America. While U.S. journals and newspapers reflected current developments from a North American perspective, a wealth of news articles and radio interviews presenting the Latin American point of view were also available through the Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS). The comparison of these sometimes diverging accounts of the same issue contributed to a more well-rounded representation of events than would have otherwise been possible by using just a single source.

The final, and most up-to-date source consulted during this research phase consisted of personal interviews with individuals actually involved in the prosecution of the U.S.-sponsored CD initiatives in Ecuador and Colombia. These interviews were quite valuable, since the sources were intimately familiar with the subject and possessed extensive knowledge relating to the U.S.-Ecuador-Colombia CD effort. A potential drawback to these personal interviews, with individuals so closely involved in the CD arena, was the loss of objectivity, so this study made every effort to verify opinions/perspectives of interviewees with other substantiating sources.

Chapter one has introduced the study's topic and discussed the research methodology and literature review relating to this thesis. The study's focus and scope will be disciplined by means of the limitations and delimitations already described. The historical/comparative research method will facilitate the validation or disproving of the overall hypothesis in a comprehensive and convincing manner. Finally, the wide variety of information, both official and otherwise, available to conduct the research appears more than adequate to reach a reliable and objective conclusion regarding the topic.

Endnotes

¹See Frederick B. Pike. The United States and the Andean Republics, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1977; Robert H. Dix. The Politics of Colombia, New York: Praeger Publishers, 1987; and Richard L. Lael. Arrogant Diplomacy, Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1987.

CHAPTER TWO

HISTORICAL RELATIONS

The histories of Ecuador and Colombia have been intertwined since the early stages of the Spanish colonization of the New World. The Viceroyalty of Peru was the most important part of Spain's South American possessions, and both modern-day Ecuador and Colombia originally belonged to this umbrella colony. However, in 1739, Spain created a new Viceroyalty, New Granada, with Bogota as its capital, that contained the modern states of Colombia, Ecuador, Panama, and Venezuela. Within this new viceroyalty existed a smaller entity known as the Audiencia of Quito, which included all of modern-day Ecuador plus parts of southern Colombia, to include the port of Buenaventura and city of Cali. Therefore, in the early stages of their respective histories, some Colombians found themselves loyal to Quito, while all Ecuadorians looked to Bogota for leadership. This common heritage and the recognized dominant role of Colombia has continued to mark Ecuadorian-Colombian relations ever since this original Spanish-imposed arrangement began.¹

While the Ecuadorians were apparently satisfied to belong to New Granada, a Spanish-imposed transfer of the Ecuadorian Oriente provinces of Quijos and Mainas (1802), as well as the Ecuadorian port city of Guayaquil (1803), to Peru were not well received by the Ecuadorians. The Ecuadorian resistance to the loss of the heavily populated Guayaquil

eventually led to its return to Ecuador in 1819. Just as the peaceful, friendly relations between Ecuador and Colombia foreshadowed the trend in future relations between these two peoples, the aggressive, hostile nature of colonial Ecuadorian-Peruvian relations continued long after the Spanish had departed.²

The early 1800s saw a rising tide of liberty and antiroyalist sentiment in South America. Led by the Great Liberator, Simon Bolivar in the north, and Jose de San Martin in the south, the Spanish control of South America quickly crumbled. Colombia's independence was secured by Bolivar at the Battle of Boyaca in 1819. Bolivar's lieutenant, Marshal Antonio Sucre, carried the independence movement to Ecuador, and was successful in winning its independence from Spain at the Battle of Pichincha in May 1822. The flush of victory had barely faded before Ecuador's fate was being debated by San Martin and Bolivar, at Guayaquil in July 1822. Using his persuasive skills, Bolivar convinced San Martin (representing Peru and the more southern lands) to allow him to incorporate Ecuador into the Colombian-led state of the Confederation of Gran Colombia, as the District of the South. Ecuador, thereby, continued its close relationship with Colombia--at the expense of Peru.³

The United States was not caught by surprise by the developments in South America and sought to act on the changed situation immediately. The U.S. recognized the independence of Gran Colombia in June 1822. The famous Monroe Doctrine was delivered by President Monroe to the U.S. Congress on 2 December 1823 and was immediately hailed as a sign of goodwill and fraternity by the people of Latin America--despite the very

limited United States' ability to enforce it. In fact, one historian, Thomas Skidmore, suggests that the Monroe Doctrine was originally directed to ward off potential claims of Czarist Russia on the American Northwest.⁴ In any case, as perception is reality, the stock of the U.S. was raised throughout Latin America by what at least appeared to be a generous and brave reassurance from their neighbor in the north. The U.S. capitalized on this popularity to rapidly secure trade agreements with the newly independent republics, such as the Treaty of Peace, Navigation, and Commerce between the U.S. and Colombia, signed on 3 October 1824. The high regard with which the U.S. was viewed by Latin America was demonstrated by the invitation from Simon Bolivar to attend the first Pan-American Congress in Panama, in 1826.⁵

While the U.S. was busy improving the conditions for trade, the Latin American states were beginning to dissolve. Between 1828-1829, the Confederation of Gran Colombia (consisting of modern-day Panama, Venezuela, Colombia, and Ecuador) was fighting a Peruvian invasion force whose goal was the annexation of Ecuador. After several battles, the Confederation forces (of whom less than half were Ecuadorian) finally defeated a larger Peruvian force at the Second Battle of Pichincha in 1829, to guarantee the territorial integrity of Ecuador. Finally, in 1830, Bolivar's dream of a united Latin America died as Gran Colombia split into the independent countries of Venezuela, Ecuador, and New Granada (consisting of modern-day Colombia and Panama).⁶

The close relationship between Ecuador and Colombia nevertheless continued, even after their separation. In 1842, it appeared as though Ecuador and Peru were yet again on the verge of hostilities. Colombia

had an alliance with Ecuador and would have been obliged to fight on Ecuador's side, had not a Colombian-Chilean mediation effort been successful. An interesting aspect to this Colombian-Ecuadorian relationship was that in 1832 Ecuador had launched a completely unsuccessful attempt to recover the Cauca Valley of Colombia, which had formerly been part of the Audiencia of Quito. It is a testament to the common fear that both Ecuador and Colombia felt towards the aggressive designs of Peru that this ill-fated Ecuadorian adventure had not destroyed the alliance. While the former Spanish colonies were occupied maintaining a regional balance of power and organizing their respective governments, the U.S. continued to pursue economic and territorial gains throughout the Western Hemisphere.⁷

In 1846, the U.S. and Colombia updated their Treaty of Peace, Friendship, Commerce, and Navigation. This new version expressly detailed arrangements concerning an issue that would dominate U.S.-Colombian relations for many years to come--the isthmus of Panama. The 1846 treaty guaranteed the U.S. full access to all communication and transportation means on the isthmus, and an equal tax rate for U.S. and Colombian citizens in Panama. In return the U.S. guaranteed the "perfect neutrality" of the isthmus, although the sovereignty of Bogota over the isthmus was also expressly acknowledged. This U.S. guarantee was no empty promise, as illustrated by at least seven U.S. military interventions into Panama during the nineteenth century to protect the neutrality and to maintain the uninterrupted railroad service between the Atlantic and Pacific coasts. The U.S. war with Mexico (1846-1848) captured the attention of the South American states and raised

sensitivities about the extent of U.S. ambitions in the Americas. An indication of the developing concern of South American states regarding U.S. intentions was the Congress of Lima, in 1847, in which Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia, Chile, and Peru pledged themselves to mutual defense in the event of a foreign (perhaps U.S.) intervention into any one of the signatory countries.⁸

The second half of the nineteenth century was one in which the U.S., Colombia, and Ecuador were forced to balance their international activities with the resolution of serious domestic issues. In the U.S., the predominant issue of the early part of this period was the preservation of the union by means of the American Civil War. The countries of Ecuador and Colombia similarly had pressing domestic power struggles taking place throughout most of this period--primarily the often violent rivalry between the Liberal and Conservative political parties within each country. Nevertheless, external circumstances forced all these players to defend their national interests and interact with the other powers located beyond their borders.

The United States continued to move towards a more dominant role in the hemisphere, although Great Britain was still a very powerful player in the Americas. In 1850, the U.S. and Great Britain signed the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty, which confirmed that neither the U.S. nor Great Britain would unilaterally build an interoceanic canal in Central America.⁹ Although the U.S. still lacked the technology and national commitment to build a canal alone, it apparently wanted to hedge its bets by ensuring that Great Britain would not single-handedly accomplish the task before the U.S. was ready to do it unilaterally.

While the U.S. was fully occupied with the American Civil War during the first-half of the 1860s, South America was becoming increasingly concerned about the intentions of their former colonizer, Spain. By 1865, a state of declared war existed between Spain and Peru. As the specter of a Spanish return to Latin America became more realistic, several of Peru's neighbors joined her struggle. Ecuador, Chile, and Bolivia allied themselves with Peru and requested U.S. intervention, in accordance with the Monroe Doctrine, to safeguard the Americas from a non-hemispheric power. As Spain failed to actually attack Peru, the U.S. was spared the requirement to either intervene or lose face with its southern neighbors. The absence of Colombia from this coalition may have just been coincidence, or perhaps, the Colombians were already learning (from their experiences with the U.S. in Panama) that open invitations to the U.S. sometimes led to excessive meddling. In any event, the U.S. did play a major peace-maker role in settling the Spanish-Peruvian Coalition dispute, which resulted in a peace treaty being signed in 1871, in Washington, D.C.¹⁰

In addition to helping to resolve disputes in Latin America, the U.S. continued to work towards obtaining full rights towards building a canal across Central America (either in Panama or Nicaragua). In 1869, a U.S.-Colombian treaty authorizing U.S. construction of a canal across Panama failed to gain Colombian ratification, while another version failed to receive U.S. Senate support a year later. The U.S. was not the only party interested in constructing an inter-oceanic canal. In 1878, the French syndicate, Turr, received permission from Colombia to begin construction on a canal across the isthmus of Panama. Although

many Americans might have feared the consequences of a French success, financial and engineering difficulties eventually forced the French to abandon the project in 1890.¹¹

The U.S. also began to assert its influence in Latin America more aggressively towards the end of the century. In 1895, the U.S. forced the British to the negotiating table to resolve the British-Venezuelan dispute over British Guyana. Next, the lop-sided U.S. victory over Spain in the Spanish-American War suddenly made the U.S. a colonial power. The difficulty experienced by the U.S. in shifting key naval vessels from the Pacific to the Atlantic during the Spanish-American War and the realization of the importance of projecting naval power to the far reaches of its new empire energized the U.S. to re-double its efforts to gain the rights to construct a canal which would connect the Atlantic and Pacific.¹²

The violent struggle between the Conservatives and Liberals, in both Ecuador and Colombia, hit a fever pitch at the close of the 19th Century. In Colombia, the bloody War of 1000 Days raged from 1898-1902. In Ecuador, a Liberal President, Eloy Alfaro, finally gained power and was faced with his own civil war against Conservative forces starting in 1896. As the Conservative Government in Colombia witnessed the reforms being taken by Alfaro in Ecuador, and their potentially destabilizing impact on Colombia, there existed a real danger of invasion from Colombia in 1900. Fortunately, cooler heads prevailed, and a negotiated solution to this potentially explosive political situation was achieved between the neighboring republics. The ability of Ecuador and Colombia to agree to a Protocol of Peace in 1900 reduced these cross-border

tensions and ensured mutual respect and non-intervention in their neighbor's internal affairs. Once again, the strong ties of friendship between Ecuador and Colombia facilitated a diplomatic, rather than a military, solution to a perceived conflict of interest between the two countries.¹³

With the arrival of President Theodore Roosevelt to the White House and the lessons learned from the Spanish-American War still fresh in the nation's memory, the early 20th Century saw the U.S. moving to once and for all build an inter-oceanic canal. In 1901, the U.S. succeeded in renegotiating the 1850 Clayton-Bulwer treaty with Great Britain to now allow the U.S. to "construct, control, and fortify" an interoceanic canal unilaterally.¹⁴ With the British obstacle now clear, the U.S. began to intensify its efforts with Colombia to secure the territorial rights to build and manage a canal across Panama. Unfortunately, an offer from the U.S. to pay a \$10 million indemnity and \$250,000 annual payment, beginning ten years thereafter, for the rights to build a canal across Panama was rejected by the Colombian Congress.¹⁵ Frustrated by yet another delay, President Roosevelt took advantage of Colombia's relative weakness (after years of civil war) to support a revolt against Colombian authority in Panama and immediately recognize the newly independent Republic of Panama in November, 1903. Predictably, the new Panamanian Government granted the U.S. generous rights to a zone within which to build and defend a trans-isthmian canal "in perpetuity"--a feat eventually accomplished in 1914.¹⁶ Colombia, however, received no immediate financial compensation for the loss of her territory, and was left to feel the sting of U.S. imperialism alone.

The issuance of the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine, in 1904, signaled the advent of still more U.S. intervention in Latin America. The corollary's premise that the U.S. reserved the right to intervene as an international police power led to a host of interventions in Latin America: Haiti (1915-34), Nicaragua (1912-25) and (1927-32), and the Dominican Republic (1916).¹⁷ Although neither Ecuador nor Colombia were directly affected by these U.S. actions, they realized that, like the rest of Latin America, they were at risk if their national interests conflicted with those of the U.S.

The Pan-American movement was somewhat stalled during this period as a result of the U.S. meddling throughout the hemisphere. At the 2d Inter-American Conference, held in Mexico in 1901-1902, Latin American states expressed concerns about U.S. intentions following the Spanish-American War. The subsequent U.S. activities throughout the region led to still greater fears throughout Latin America, as Latin Americans began to fear the U.S. more than their traditional European foes. According to James Lee Ray in Latin America--Its Problems and Its Promise, while the U.S. saw the Pan-American Conferences as an opportunity to advance its trade interests, the Latin American states saw the meetings as an opportunity to reduce the level of U.S. intervention in the region. An indication of the relative weakness of these conferences was that as Ecuador and Peru prepared for yet another border war in 1910, it was an ad-hoc group composed of the U.S., Argentina, and Brazil (not the Inter-American organization) that defused the situation and averted the war.¹⁸

Despite the occasional fears of U.S. intervention in the region, World War I saw a display of unity by Latin America that was unprecedented. All Latin American countries (except Argentina) supported the U.S. by either declaring war or breaking relations with Germany.¹⁹ Although only a couple of Latin American countries participated directly in the war, the overall Latin American solidarity with the U.S. war effort reflected their important diplomatic ties and growing economic relationships with the United States.

The post-World War I scene in Latin America saw a strengthened U.S. becoming a more dominant economic presence. The U.S. had transformed itself from a net-debtor nation prior to World War I to a country that increased its loans to Latin America from \$2 billion in 1919 to \$5.24 billion just one year later. In Colombia the rising economic importance of the U.S. was particularly noticeable. The U.S. represented only 37 percent of Colombian exports in 1913, but by 1929 the U.S. share had grown to 67 percent of total Colombian exports.²⁰

The strong economic ties and conciliatory U.S. approach towards Colombia concerning the Panama Canal issue led to a very warm period in U.S.-Colombian relations during the 1920s. In addition to the strong growth in trade, the U.S. finally ratified the Thompson-Urrutia Treaty in 1922, which provided a \$25 million indemnity to Colombia for the territory lost during the Panamanian "revolt" of 1903. So warm were the relations between the U.S. and Colombia that two Colombian presidents of the 1920s and 1930s advocated a national policy of *Res Pice Polum* (Follow the North Star), in recognition of the essential leadership offered by the U.S.²¹

While a period of economic boom was taking place in Latin America during the post-World War I period, some old regional rivalries were also at play. A disagreement between Colombia and Peru over territory claimed by both in the Amazon Basin had resulted in the Soloman-Lozano Treaty in 1922. This treaty called for Colombia to receive the key town of Leticia (it provided Colombia with access to the Amazon River) and for Peru to gain a 300-mile long strip of land on the south side of the Putumayo River directly facing Ecuador. Although the U.S. did not initially feel strongly one way or the other regarding the content of the treaty, it did press for timely ratification of the agreement, which was eventually realized in 1928. This treaty, and the U.S. pressure to ratify it, upset the Ecuadorians who suddenly saw their strategic landscape changed--a 300-mile friendly border with Colombia had been exchanged for a 300-mile border with a historic aggressor. The Peruvians then seized Colombia's town of Leticia in 1932, and Ecuador was prepared to join Colombia in an effort to dislodge the Peruvians. However, a League of Nations solution, which returned Leticia to Colombia was mediated before any further hostilities occurred. Unfortunately for Ecuador, the next time Peru decided to seize a neighbor's territory, the world would be too occupied with larger issues to mediate a return of captured lands.²²

The U.S., meanwhile, dramatically shifted its policies toward Latin America during the 1920s and 1930s. The growing frustration of the Latin American states at the series of U.S. interventions in the Caribbean and Central America led to generally antagonistic feelings being directed at the U.S. during the 5th and 6th Inter-American

Conferences held in Santiago (1924) and Havana (1928), respectively. This Latin American frustration was exacerbated by the refusal of the U.S. to join the League of Nations, which espoused non-intervention principles, while still explicitly recognizing the legitimacy of the Monroe Doctrine. Recognizing the validity of some of the Latin American concerns, and presumably in an effort to strengthen U.S. security in the event of another major war, President Franklin D. Roosevelt launched the Good Neighbor Policy. President Roosevelt used the 7th Inter-American Conference to reveal his new policy, which would restrict U.S. interference in other American states' internal or external affairs. After reaffirming the Good Neighbor Policy again at the 1936 Inter-American Conference for the Maintenance of Peace at Buenos Aires, and more importantly, restraining U.S. reaction to the nationalization of U.S. oil concessions in Bolivia (1937) and Mexico (1938), Latin Americans became believers that the U.S. had indeed made a fundamental policy adjustment toward the Americas.²³

As the winds of World War II began to whip Europe and Asia into a frenzy, the U.S. was making the most of the improved U.S.-Latin American relations to prepare the hemisphere for war. In 1939, the first Meeting of American Foreign Ministers occurred in Panama and resolved not to recognize territorial transfers in the Americas that were based on German victories in Europe. A follow-up meeting in July, 1940, in Havana, established the concept of "One for All, and All for One", that would serve as the hallmark of Inter-American relations throughout the war. Although no American states were yet directly

involved in the World War, the U.S. was clearly marshalling its hemispheric allies to support her inevitable entry.²⁴

While the world watched intently the developments between the Allied and Axis powers, another form of blitzkrieg, albeit on a much smaller scale, occurred in 1941 along the Ecuadorian-Peruvian border. A Peruvian invasion force, supported by a battalion of Czech-made tanks, artillery, and air power crossed the Ecuadorian border and rapidly moved north along the coast, threatening Guayaquil. Already focused on the worsening situation in Europe and the Pacific, the U.S. "was in no mood to allow neighbors in its 'backyard' to fight among themselves" and imposed a solution, called the Rio Protocol in early 1942. This protocol awarded Peru a large section of Ecuador's Amazon region in return for Peru's withdrawal from Ecuador's coastal region. Although this settlement satisfied the U.S., its co-sponsors, and Peru, this loss of land continues to be contested by the Ecuadorians to this day.²⁵

Following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the Americas quickly gathered to develop a plan of defense. In January, 1942, an emergency meeting of Foreign Ministers resulted in all American states (except for Argentina and Chile) either declaring war or breaking relations with the Axis Powers. The U.S. also organized the Inter-American Defense Board and established procedures for Lend-lease issuance, U.S. grants, and requested rights to establish air bases at strategic locations throughout the hemisphere. Both Colombia and Ecuador played prominently in the U.S. defense planning, primarily due to their geographical locations near the critical Panama Canal. During the war, Colombia allowed the U.S. to construct Air and Naval Bases to

improve the security of the Panama Canal, authorized the establishment of a U.S. counter-espionage network throughout the country, and deported German citizens (while nationalizing their holdings). Ecuador also closely collaborated with the U.S. by immediately declaring war, signing two bilateral agreements relating to equipment transfers, and authorizing U.S. Air Bases in the Galapagos Islands and coastal town of Salinas. While not critical to the U.S. war effort, the cooperation of the American states allowed the U.S. to focus on its primary threats, without having to divert many assets or devote too much effort worrying about the "rear area" throughout the war.²⁶

Instead of enjoying the hard-won peace and their new role as a world power, the U.S. had to move quickly after World War II to prevent the expansion of another threat, the Soviet Union and her designs for world communism. The U.S. efforts to contain this "Red Menace" involved all corners of the world, to include Latin America. In 1947, the U.S. organized the formation of the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (Pact of Rio), which committed all of the American states to a common defense. Additionally, the 9th Inter-American Conference witnessed the birth of the Organization of American States (OAS) in 1948. The important role played by Colombia in the formation of the OAS was reflected by a former Colombian president, Alberto Lleras Camargo, being elected the first Secretary General of the OAS (1948-54). While these organizations certainly enhanced the common defense of the Americas, the U.S. also began establishing Military Missions throughout the hemisphere to assist the host nations with their particular security challenges. By 1952, every Latin American country had authorized the

establishment of a U.S. Military Mission in their country. A final element of the U.S. military strategy to prevent communist advances in Latin America was the founding of the U.S. Army School of the Americas (SOA) in Panama in 1949. Over the decades the SOA would train tens of thousands of Latin American officers and NCOs, both in Panama and, later, at Fort Benning, Georgia.²⁷

Despite the beginning of the civil war known as "La Violencia", in 1948, Colombia continued to play an important regional and international role--generally strongly supporting U.S. objectives. After receiving Latin America's first World Bank Mission (a U.S.-dominated organization) in 1949, Colombia's ties to the U.S. appeared stronger than ever. Colombia contributed an Infantry Battalion (1000 men) and their best navy ship to support the U.S. effort during the Korean War--the only Latin American country to do so. Several years later, in response to the 1956 U.S.-led Peacekeeping mission in the Sinai, Colombia again sent forces, this time to the Middle East. Even Ecuador, a much more reserved world player, offered to send troops to the Sinai to support President Eisenhower's peace initiative in 1956.²⁸

The Kennedy Administration's Alliance for Progress filled Latin America with optimism in the early 1960s. In response to the Cuban revolution's success, President John F. Kennedy offered U.S. assistance to encourage Latin America to eliminate the conditions that made revolution likely. Following the 1960 Act of Bogota and the Charter of Punta del Este, the U.S. initiated the Alliance for Progress. This program was similar to the Marshall Plan and called for the investment of \$11 billion, over a ten-year period, to advance the development of

the Latin American economies. Colombia was designated to be a "showcase" for the positive effect of the Alliance for Progress and received \$750 million in aid between 1961-67. Even Ecuador, a lower priority country that had undergone a military coup in 1964, continued to receive \$84.5 million in aid during the three years that the junta stayed in power. The Alliance for Progress, however, was eventually abandoned by the U.S. in the late 1960s. The increasing focus and cost of the U.S. involvement in Vietnam and the lack of actual restructuring undertaken by the individual Latin American countries were considered two of the primary causes of the failure of the Alliance.²⁹

Faced with the reality of a less Latin American-oriented U.S. administration, the Latin American republics in the late 1960s began to increase their regional integration in an effort to gain the benefits not fully realized during the Alliance for Progress. Ecuador and Colombia, which had joined the Latin America Free Trade Association (LAFTA) in 1960, had seen the benefits that regional free trade agreements could achieve as overall intra-regional trade increased 100 percent between 1961 and 1968. In 1969, Ecuador, Colombia, Bolivia, Chile, and Peru left LAFTA to create the Andean Common Market (ANCOM). Ecuador, now an oil-producing country, also joined OPEC in 1973, a further sign of its increased independence.³⁰

Although relations between the U.S., Ecuador, and Colombia remained warm throughout the 1970s, occasional tensions did arise. In the early 1970s, Ecuador detained about 100 U.S. tuna fishing boats and charged them approximately \$6 million in fines and fees for allegedly fishing in Ecuador's territorial seas.³¹ Starting in 1974, the U.S.

invoked the Foreign Trade Act of 1974 against Ecuador, which denied favorable U.S. tariff treatments to OPEC members--despite the fact that Ecuador had not participated in the 1973 OPEC oil embargo against the U.S.³² In 1975, President Alfonso Lopez Michelsen of Colombia restored diplomatic relations with Cuba and requested the termination of U.S. aid since he felt it bred "unhealthy economic dependency."³³

From the mid-1970s to the present, Ecuador and Colombia have continued their maturation process, which has been marked by a greater sense of regionalization, some independence, and yet still considerable dependence on the U.S. In 1978, Ecuador and Colombia joined the Amazon Pact (along with five other South American countries), in an effort to promote the joint development of the Amazon Basin. The particular administration in power in either Ecuador or Colombia was often the driving factor in the degree of closeness with the U.S. during this period. For instance, President Belisario Betancur of Colombia led his country into the Non-Aligned Movement in 1982 in an effort to distance Colombia from the U.S., yet by the administration of Virgilio Barco in the late 1980s, Colombia voted the fourth most consistently (out of the 100 member countries) in favor of U.S. issues debated within the non-aligned organization. When serious threats to their national security developed, such as the renewed fighting along the Ecuadorian-Peruvian border in 1981, the entry of the U.S. and other Latin American nations to mediate the dispute was welcomed by Ecuador.³⁴

The relations between the U.S., Ecuador, and Colombia have been marked by a wide range of shared interests and occasional animosities since their beginnings almost two centuries ago. At one time or

another, all of these countries feared the intentions of one another due to the previous outcome of a particular treaty or action. Nevertheless, the role of the U.S. as a generally supportive and important ally has been a consistent trend throughout this period. That is not to suggest that the U.S. would automatically support Ecuador or Colombia in a dispute with a fellow American state; the U.S. inclination has always been to attempt to avoid potential conflicts by mediation and compromise rather than allow the disruption of free trade and potential upsetting of the established security arrangements.

Ecuador and Colombia, due to their common origin, comfortable senior-partner/junior-partner relationship, and common perceived threat (Peru) have remained close allies since their independence. Obviously, Ecuador and Colombia interact with a great many states and have different roles and responsibilities in these other relationships (Colombia-Venezuela, for instance). The fact remains, however, that the effect on the regional security balance created by this particular Ecuadorian-Colombian relationship has been a stabilizing one, and therefore supportive of overall U.S. policy interests in the region.

The remainder of this study will examine, in detail, the CD efforts of the U.S. government in Ecuador and Colombia during the 1980s and 1990s to determine if these efforts have enhanced, detracted or not significantly impacted the traditionally positive relations which have marked Ecuadorian-Colombian relations since the days of Gran Colombia.

Endnotes

¹Howard J. Wiarda, ed., Latin American Politics and Development (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1980), 237; and Department of the Army, Ecuador--A Country Study (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office), 11-12.

²Ecuador Country Study, 15-16. Recent border clashes between Ecuador and Peru occurred in 1981 and again in January, 1995. The 1995 border dispute resulted in the deployment of an international peacekeeping force composed of the 1942 Rio Protocol Guarantor nations (U.S., Brazil, Argentina, and Chile) to prevent further violence. The peacekeeping force remains in-place on the Ecuadorian-Peruvian border at the time of the preparation of this study.

³Wiarda, 237; and Ecuador Country Study, 18.

⁴Thomas E. Skidmore, Modern Latin America (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), 324.

⁵Samuel F. Bemis, A Diplomatic History of the United States (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1955), 201-202, 208-209; and Congressional Information Service, "Convention With Colombia" (Washington: 1st Session, 19th Congress, 1825), 767.

⁶Ecuador Country Study, 19, 208

⁷Frederick B. Pike, The United States and the Andean Republics (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1977), 123-124; and Ecuador Country Study, 19.

⁸Richard L. Lael, Arrogant Diplomacy (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1987), 1; and Pike, 124-125.

⁹Jan K. Black, ed., Latin America: Its Problems and Its Promise (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1984), 211.

¹⁰Pike, 126.

¹¹Lael, 2.

¹²Black, 210-211; and Lael, 2-3.

¹³Pike, 151; and Colombia - A Country Study (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office), 27-28.

¹⁴Lael, 3.

¹⁵Robert H. Dix, The Politics of Colombia (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1987), 195.

¹⁶Black, 223, 329.

- ¹⁷Black, 211.
- ¹⁸Bemis, 385-389, 756; and Black, 211-212; and Ecuador Country Study, 26.
- ¹⁹Bemis, 759.
- ²⁰Pike, 193; and Dix, 32.
- ²¹Dix, 195; and Colombia Country Study, 238.
- ²²Pike, 203, 204, 245.
- ²³Bemis, 759, 761, 763; and Black, 212-213.
- ²⁴Bemis, 773-774.
- ²⁵Ecuador Country Study, 209-210; and Black, 214. See Endnote No. 2 reference recent outbreaks of violence between Ecuador and Peru along the disputed area of their common border.
- ²⁶Bemis, 776; and Colombia Country Study, 259-260; and Ecuador Country Study, 234.
- ²⁷Black, 215; Bemis, 780; and Colombia Country Study, 237, 260.
- ²⁸Colombia Country Study, 37, 182, 260; Dix, 196; Foreign Relations of the United States, 968.
- ²⁹Pike, 304 and 316; and Dix, 196.
- ³⁰Black, 215-216; and Ecuador Country Study, 42, 200.
- ³¹Ecuador Country Study, 198.
- ³²Ecuador Country Study, 198.
- ³³Dix., 198.
- ³⁴Dix, 198; Colombia Country Study, 241; and Ecuador Country Study, 200-202.

CHAPTER THREE

COUNTER-DRUG RELATIONS

The last twenty years have witnessed the rebirth of a dynamic, corrosive phenomenon in the Americas--cocaine. The United States, Ecuador, and Colombia have all felt the impact of this powerful force domestically, as well as its complicating effect on each country's foreign relations. In response to this recognized threat, these three countries have adopted various strategies to confront this common menace. These individual efforts have at times brought these countries closer together, while at other times seriously threatened the continued warm relations that they have traditionally enjoyed. This portion of the study will examine the narcotrafficking threats faced by these three states, their unilateral, bilateral, and combined efforts to face these challenges, and indicators of the effect of these interactions on the bilateral relations between Ecuador and Colombia.

This most recent episode of cocaine use by the peoples of the Americas is by no means the first.¹ Andean natives chewed coca leaves as a source of energy over 3000 years ago. The Spanish colonizers later used coca leaves to pay their conquered indigenous laborers. The late 1800s saw a period of great growth in cocaine use, in both the U.S. and Europe, as such famous individuals as Sigmund Freud, Jules Verne, and Thomas Edison endorsed its use in both pure and mixed products to gain a variety of supposed health benefits. By the end of the nineteenth

century, however, clear indications of the danger posed by cocaine abuse led to increasing criticism of the drug. This change in public opinion resulted in the passage of the 1914 Harrison Narcotics Act, which restricted the use and manufacture of cocaine and other drugs. Cocaine use declined sharply after this legislation, and remained low through the 1970s, due partly to this legislation and also the availability of other, legal drugs such as amphetamines, which were not outlawed until passage of the 1970 Controlled Substance Act.

During the 1970s, organized crime forces in Colombia began to make inroads into the lucrative marijuana, and later, cocaine trafficking business which supplied an ever-increasing demand in the U.S. By 1977, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) already had a separate case file for the rapidly growing Medellin Cartel Syndicate. The rising U.S. demand also forced the Colombian drug traffickers, whose coca supplies were limited, to expand their cultivation operations into both Bolivia and Peru. Nevertheless, the refining laboratories and transportation hubs, for delivery of the finished product to the U.S., still remained in Colombia. The rise of the narcotraffickers' power was so rapid that during the single administration of Colombian President Alfonso Lopez Michelson (1974-1978), drug trafficking went from being considered a threat of limited concern to a recognized force having a "ruinous impact on . . . the political and economic structure of Colombian society."²

The recognition of the narcotrafficker threat to the welfare of Colombia was also clearly recognized by Colombia's next president, Julio Turbay Ayala (1978-1982). President Turbay made combatting

narcotrafficking and guerrillas his top priority. Shortly after assuming office, he declared a "state of siege" and issued the National Security Statute of 1978, which proved quite effective, particularly against guerrilla groups. In 1978, President Turbay also ordered the Colombian Army to deploy 12,000 soldiers to the Department of La Guajira, to destroy marijuana plantations and arrest drug traffickers, while the Colombian Navy blockaded the coast to prevent the movement of drug shipments to the U.S. In December 1980, a Colombian counter-drug (CD) effort with U.S. assistance, code named Operation *Tiburón*, resulted in the seizure of more than 2,700 tons of marijuana in this area of Colombia. Perhaps the most enduring CD legacies of this administration, however, were the establishment of the Judicial Police (responsible for investigating narcotics-related crimes) and the approval of the 1979 Extradition Treaty with the U.S., which allowed the Colombian government to extradite Colombian citizens accused of narcotics crimes in the U.S.³

Although Colombia was already experiencing a national narcotrafficking crisis, Ecuador during this period seemed to be spared from most of the narcotics-related difficulties of its neighbor. No coca cultivation occurred in Ecuador until the 1980s, perhaps due to already available cultivation areas in Colombia, Bolivia, and Peru, and the fact that until 1979, Ecuador was under direct military rule-- normally not considered a supportive environment for illegal activities.⁴

During the late 1970s and early 1980s, Colombia, Ecuador, and the U.S. demonstrated radically different patterns of behavior with regard to the growing narcotrafficking threat. Colombia, having already

felt the destabilizing impact of the drug cartels, was actively confronting the narcotraffickers with both its police and military forces. Ecuador, still relatively unaffected from most spill-over narcotrafficking and cross-border violence, remained somewhat indifferent to the plight of its northern neighbor. The U.S. was positioned between these two extremes: very involved as a consumer, yet still generally indifferent to the potential danger represented by its rising cocaine demand. A 1973 report from the U.S. National Commission on Marijuana and Drug Abuse, which downplayed the negative effects of cocaine use, was apparently taken as a green light for the "safe" use of cocaine as a recreational drug. Between 1974 and 1982, the numbers of Americans having tried cocaine at least once rose from 5.4 million to 21.6 million. The association of cocaine use during this period with successful, professional people, like attorneys, physicians, and athletes, blunted much of the criticism of this expensive, but apparently harmless drug in the U.S. For the present, at least, cocaine use remained an issue which was not of much concern to most Americans, although that would soon change.⁵

The 1980s saw the tentacles of the narcotrafficking organizations, and their resulting human devastation through drug abuse, reach the United States and Ecuador in such a way that both these countries had no option except to, like Colombia before them, respond to the cocaine threat directly. The U.S. response led to far greater interaction on CD matters, with both Ecuador and Colombia, than had been the case up to this point. The Ecuadorian response reflected their initial recognition of the threat that narcotrafficking posed to their

nation, and their first efforts to combat the trafficking threat and avoid becoming "Colombianized."⁶ While these two new players entered the CD struggle, Colombia continued to serve as the first line of defense in this increasingly regional struggle.

The early 1980s saw the beginning of a U.S. realization that cocaine was a threat to American society. The so-called "Cocaine Wars" of South Florida captured the attention of the nation as Colombian cocaine cartels forcibly began to seize control of the wholesale distribution of their products within the U.S. By 1981, U.S. annual seizures of cocaine had risen nearly eight-fold since 1970, and emergency room visits for cocaine-related incidents had jumped 300 percent since 1976. In recognition of these new domestic developments and the ongoing Colombian CD efforts, the U.S. provided \$3.6 million to Colombia under the International Narcotics Control Program in FY 81. Although President Reagan declared a "war" on drugs in February 1982, and in 1984 established the National Drug Enforcement Board, the U.S. was still in something of an assessment phase, and did not appear to have developed any real strategy to confront the international traffickers or their domestic abusers.⁷

In Ecuador, 1984 marked the year that the narcotics traffickers started to develop an Ecuadorian base of operations. Up until this time, Ecuador had worried about the potential for cross-border movement of narcotrafficking into their territory, but it was not until 1984 that significant levels of coca cultivation, processing centers of cocaine, and transshipment of cocaine products appeared. The drug war had finally arrived in Ecuador, and newly-elected President Leon Febres Cordero was

ready for the challenge. President Febres Cordero aggressively directed Ecuadorian CD forces, supported by U.S.-lent helicopters, against the narcotraffickers. Due to the immature state of the narcotrafficker organizations and determined nature of the Ecuadorian effort, the narcotrafficking threat had essentially been eliminated by 1987. Ecuador had won the first round of her drug war and successfully avoided becoming another Colombia, but the traffickers still had plans for Ecuador in the future.⁸

Colombia spent the early and mid-1980s locked in a protracted struggle with the narcotraffickers that truly tested the country's commitment to the CD cause. Although President Turbay continued to press the CD fight until the end of his term (1982), the next president, Belisario Betancur, initially softened the Colombian government's CD stance by opposing the extradition of narcotraffickers to the U.S., based on issues of sovereignty. President Betancur's attitude towards the narcotraffickers changed dramatically, however, after the assassination of his Justice Minister, Rodrigo Lara Bonilla, in April, 1984, apparently in reprisal for the Colombian government's discovery and destruction of a huge narcotics laboratory in Tranquilandia. President Betancur subsequently declared a "war without quarter" against the narcotraffickers and, in a reversal, authorized the extradition of thirteen Colombian drug traffickers to the U.S. The fear of the Colombian government's most powerful weapon, extradition, then brought the narcotraffickers to the negotiating table. In 1984, the traffickers allegedly offered to pay off the Colombian national debt and terminate their involvement in the drug trade, in return for a government

guarantee of freedom from extradition and authorization to invest their profits in Colombia. The Betancur administration, and indeed the Colombian society as a whole, categorically rejected this offer.'

The mid-to-late 1980s witnessed a heightened awareness by the U.S., Ecuador, and Colombia of the scope of the narcotrafficking menace to their respective societies. While all three parties recognized the transnational nature of the drug scourge, the U.S. tended to assist its Latin American neighbors on a bilateral basis, while Ecuador and Colombia began tentative regional efforts at combatting the narcotrafficking problem.

By the mid-1980s, the Reagan Administration realized that its reliance on rhetoric and a limited commitment (both in terms of financial resources and inter-agency CD efforts) were not reducing the tide of narcotics shipments and increasing addiction statistics within the nation. In an effort to gain the initiative, President Reagan issued National Security Decision Directive (NSDD) 221 in April 1986, which stated that drug trafficking constituted a lethal threat to the nation's national security and expanded the role of American military forces in the CD fight. As if to demonstrate this change in attitude, the U.S. conducted Operation Blast Furnace in Bolivia, in July 1986, which for the first time saw the introduction of U.S. Army ground and aviation forces into CD operations. Amid the mid-term election pressure to solve the drug problem, the U.S. Congress passed the Anti-Drug Act of 1986, which authorized an unprecedented \$3.9 billion for CD efforts in FY-87, of which three-quarters was earmarked towards the supply side (e.g., eradication and interdiction) and the remaining quarter toward

the demand (e.g., prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation) aspects of the problem.¹⁰

The U.S. goals of reducing the trafficking and abuse of cocaine and its more addictive variations, such as crack, showed little sign of success following these initial legislative efforts and inter-agency taskings. In 1988, a New York Times/CBS Poll reported that 48 percent of Americans considered drug trafficking to be the nation's most important foreign policy issue. Consequently, in 1988, the U.S. Congress passed the Omnibus Drug Act of 1988, which, in addition to authorizing \$6.3 billion in overall CD expenditures, began a shift from a heavily supply-oriented approach toward a more demand-oriented focus (to eventually reach 60 percent demand--40 percent supply by FY 90). This shift in emphasis had been long requested by Latin American leaders (to include Colombian President Virgilio Barco), who felt that the U.S. was not fully pressing the fight domestically, and thereby not making an equivalent sacrifice in comparison to the efforts of states like Colombia.¹¹

While the U.S. focused on legislative efforts and bilateral assistance to advance its CD interests, Ecuador was occupied with eliminating an incipient narcotrafficking industry and forging additional security ties with its neighbors. In addition to the more publicized U.S. assistance, Ecuador was also collaborating with her neighbors in the CD effort. As early as September 1985, Ecuador was conducting high-level, CD-specific coordination meetings with Colombia to exchange information and plan future CD operations along their common border area in the Amazon basin. In a politically delicate initiative

during 1985-86, Ecuadorian and Peruvian police undertook combined CD actions along their common border in an effort known as Operation Condor. In the next logical step of this process, a CD operation involving Ecuador, Peru, and Colombia took place during the Spring of 1986, once again along the narco-infested Amazon border area.¹²

In addition to these purely CD activities, Ecuador and Colombia worked together in response to an attack by FARC (Armed Revolutionary Forces of Colombia) guerrillas against an Ecuadorian military outpost. In February, 1987, a 40-50 man FARC element attacked, and almost overran, an Ecuadorian Army detachment at Cuembi, along the Putumayo River. Upon notification of the attack, the Colombian Armed Forces immediately joined the Ecuadorian Army in a combined operation designed to capture the subversives.¹³

Despite the successful destruction of the narcotrafficking industry in Ecuador between 1985-87, a new wave of narcotrafficking threats began to appear in 1988 and 1989. In October 1988, a superior court judge in Quito who had been working on a number of drug cases was murdered. Other Ecuadorian judges also began to receive death threats. In early 1989, the easier access to the U.S. market offered by Ecuador began to lure Colombian and Bolivian drug traffickers to the country. The U.S. DEA estimated that 30-50 tons of cocaine began to be smuggled through Ecuador to the U.S. annually, by both container ships and air freight. To many Ecuadorians, it must have appeared that their dreaded "Colombianization" was beginning.¹⁴

This period of 1985-89 continued to be a difficult era for Colombia, which was already in its second decade of the CD struggle.

Although Colombia began to work somewhat more closely with her neighbors, such as during the Ecuador-Colombia-Peru border CD operations of 1985-86, her main external interaction on CD matters continued to be with the U.S.

The administration of President Barco (1986-90) faced its first major CD challenge as it tried to preserve the U.S. Extradition Treaty in late 1986. After the Colombian Supreme Court, which was under considerable pressure from the drug cartels, declared the 1980 Extradition Treaty unconstitutional--based on a signature technicality, President Barco resigned the treaty two days later and thereby reactivated the accord. The narcotraffickers did not give up, though, and by mid-1987, the Barco Administration was denied the authority to order any more extraditions, based on two additional Colombian Supreme Court rulings.¹⁵

The invalidation of the U.S. Extradition Treaty, however, did not signal a reduction in the CD effort of the Barco Administration. A series of assassinations by the drug cartels on prominent Colombians, including the Attorney General, Carlos Mauro Hoyos Jimenez, in 1987, led President Barco to enact stringent measures in an effort to control the violence. In January 1988, the Barco Administration issued the Statutes for the Defense of Democracy, which implemented rigorous antiterrorist measures, expanded the powers of the security forces, and re-integrated the military forces into the CD fight.¹⁶

The drug traffickers, known as "The Extraditables," continued their narcoterrorism into 1989 and 1990 as they targeted pro-extradition Colombian politicians for assassination. During July and August of

1989, these assassins succeeded in killing both the Governor of Antioquia Department and a leading presidential candidate Senator Luis Galan Sarmiento. The Barco Administration's response to these outrages were swift and severe; a state of siege was declared, the seizure of narcotraffickers' property was approved, 10,000 citizens were arrested, and seven day detentions of suspected narcotraffickers were permitted.¹⁷

The U.S. and Ecuador both understood the gravity of the deteriorating situation in Colombia. Both countries were aware of the potential for a negative impact on their own CD efforts, should the Colombian situation worsen. Accordingly, each nation took actions designed to both help Colombia, and better defend their particular interests, during this crisis period.

The moderate Ecuadorian Administration of President Rodrigo Borja (1988-92) worked closely with Colombian authorities to prevent the escape of Colombian narcotraffickers across the border into Ecuador, during this 1989-90 period of narcoterrorism in Colombia. As early as June 1989, President Borja and President Barco discussed the establishment of bilateral Neighborhood Border Commissions to resolve the many border situations arising each day along their common boundary. Following the Colombian government's crackdown, in August 1989, Ecuadorian authorities announced the reinforcement of their border with Colombia. In the weeks that followed, Ecuadorian authorities enacted new policies to restrict the purchase of farm land by Colombians, prohibited non-daylight border crossings, and even began an investigation into the suspected misrouting of legally-imported precursor chemicals that were allegedly finding their way into the hands

of the narcotraffickers, for use in the cocaine refining process. Finally, in September 1989, the Ecuadorian Foreign Minister officially requested additional CD assistance from the United States.¹⁸

The U.S. also promptly reacted to the worrisome situation in Colombia. Ever since President Bush's Inaugural Address promise that "This scourge must end . . .," Latin Americans were anxiously awaiting the U.S. plan to achieve the president's stated goal. In September 1989, the Bush Administration took three important actions. First, the newly appointed Drug Czar William Bennett issued the National Drug Control Strategy, which specifically established a priority on reducing the cocaine supply from the Andean cocaine-producing countries.¹⁹ The second action was the 19 September 1989 announcement by Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney that the Department of Defense would now undertake a high-priority national security mission by "detecting and countering the production and trafficking of illegal drugs."²⁰ Finally, President Bush announced his Andean Strategy, which consisted of three phases: phase I--\$65 million USD in emergency aid to Colombia; phase II--a budget proposal for \$261 million USD for Bolivia, Colombia, and Peru during the next year and; and phase III--\$2.2 billion USD in CD overall spending over the next five fiscal years.²¹

In addition to these U.S. and Ecuadorian actions, other regional initiatives were also developed in an effort to assist Colombia. In August 1989, the Organization of American States and Brazil jointly developed a plan to improve security along the Colombian border, and if the situation deteriorated, possibly to deploy Brazilian troops to support the Colombian government. Venezuela also tightened its border

controls with Colombia in November 1989, and Argentina donated three Pucara aircraft to Colombia in December 1989, to enhance Colombia's CD capabilities.²²

While the U.S. and other friends of Colombia were devising ways to better arm the Colombian police and military to face the drug trafficker threat, President Barco began to seek other, less belligerent, support. During a September 1989, visit to Washington, D.C., President Barco suggested to both President Bush and Drug Czar Bennett that reduced trade restrictions were more important than new helicopters to the success of Colombia's CD fight. In fact, President Barco and Drug Czar Bennett reportedly spoke more about Colombian flower and coffee exports than that country's cocaine product.²³ Colombia, the nation that had been fighting the narcotraffickers longer and harder than any other country, no longer felt that a purely law enforcement/counterinsurgency approach could alone overcome the international drug challenge.

The Bush Administration apparently agreed with this multifaceted approach to the CD threat. In February, 1990, President Bush participated in a Drug Summit with the presidents of Colombia, Bolivia, and Peru. During this summit, which took place in Cartagena, Colombia, President Bush downplayed the military aspects of the U.S. CD strategy, admitted that U.S. demand was an essential element of the international drug problem, and mentioned a trade initiative under consideration for the Andean nations.²⁴ Although Ecuador had not been invited to the summit, due to its relatively small narcotrafficking problem, Ecuadorian diplomats expressed no public disappointment. Instead, they revealed

that President Borja and the U.S. Secretary of State James Baker had recently met in San Jose, Costa Rica, and that Ecuador was considered very much part of the Andean Ridge CD equation.²⁵

Another U.S. attempt toward decreasing CD tensions between the U.S. and its Latin American partners, while seeking an innovative way to turn the CD tide, was revealed in June, 1990, as President Bush launched his Enterprise of the Americas Initiative. This refreshing approach to the CD issue, sometimes referred to as "cooperation through partnership," promised a reduction in the official Latin American debt to the U.S. and raised the prospect for future free trade agreements. While Colombia, Bolivia, and Peru were certain of assistance through this initiative, Ecuador was also reassured of its incorporation into the program as well in July 1990.²⁶

While the Enterprise of the Americas Initiative was designed for the entire Latin American community, another Bush Administration program was the Andean Trade Preference Act (ATPA), which was targeted toward those countries most affected by the narcotrafficking scourge. This initiative was considered to be the "trade component to President Bush's war on drugs" and allowed substantially relaxed rules of origin and duty-free status for approximately 6,000 Andean products to the U.S. market.²⁷ In addition to the recognized Andean CD-states of Colombia, Bolivia, and Peru, Ecuador was also included in this program, which sought to assist the drug-skewed Andean economies in developing alternate sources of revenue.²⁸

The Latin American reaction to these U.S. economic initiatives, and increasing U.S. acceptance of "co-responsibility" for the existence

of the international drug trade, breathed new life into the regional CD effort. During his September 1990 UN speech, the new Colombian President Cesar Gaviria discussed the positive outcomes of the Cartagena Summit, applauded President Bush's efforts at demand-reduction, and endorsed the Andean Trade Preference Bill. When President Bush then visited Latin America in December 1990, he received unanimous, enthusiastic support for fundamentally altering the framework of U.S.-Latin American relations.²⁹

For several years prior to 1990, the states of the Andean Pact (Colombia, Ecuador, Venezuela, Bolivia, and Peru) had been working toward breaking down trade barriers within their own organization. These efforts often took the form of one-to-three year bilateral agreements between member states. These rather slow, deliberate efforts seemed to receive a new vigor, however, by the Bush Administration's economic initiatives of 1990. President Cesar Gaviria publicly suggested that the Enterprise of the Americas Initiative improved incentives for increased bilateral agreements between Andean Pact members, while his Foreign Minister Luis Jaramillo counseled that the economic integration of Colombia, Ecuador, and Venezuela was essential to economic growth. The economic integration of Ecuador and Colombia was gaining momentum.³⁰

Although 1990 was a year of important achievements in the diplomatic and economic fronts of the CD fight, the challenges along the Ecuadorian-Colombian border were mounting. In May 1990, Colombian authorities captured a quantity of Ecuadorian-produced dynamite near their common border and demanded an Ecuadorian explanation. In October

1990, a Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARC) element attacked an Ecuadorian town along the San Miguel River, killing several citizens. By late 1990, the Colombian Presidential Advisor for International Affairs announced that the Good Neighborhood Commission between Ecuador and Colombia had been established and was functioning. While the commission was a step in the right direction, it could not prevent the reported continuing ecological damage to the Putumayo and San Miguel Rivers, due to drug processing and cultivation, nor could this commission alone prevent an ambush in October 1990, of an Ecuadorian Army patrol along the border by Colombian narcoguerrillas.³¹

In 1991, further signs of increasing CD cooperation on a regional and international level appeared. In February 1991, during President Gaviria's visit to Washington, four new bilateral cooperative agreements were signed, including one which promised U.S. information sharing with the Colombian Judicial system. In Ecuador, a new CD organization was also established in June 1991. This organization, known as CONSEP (National Council for the Control of Drugs and Psychotropic Substances), although lacking some legal powers, was a sign of a growing Ecuadorian concern regarding the rising narco threat. In September 1991 during the International World Police Congress in Bogota, additional antidrug agreements were signed by the U.S., Colombia, and Ecuador, as well as many other countries involved in the CD fight.³²

The movement toward greater Ecuadorian-Colombian cooperation and integration also continued during 1991. In August, during a three-day visit to Ecuador by President Gaviria, a Neighborhood Agreement and agricultural agreement were signed. Also, plans for an Andean Free

Trade Zone, which each country would join within a year, were also discussed. As a CD initiative, a Judicial Cooperation Agreement was jointly planned for future implementation. A few weeks later, Ecuador and Colombia announced that visa requirements for visiting each other's country would be eliminated as part of a tourism and integration program.³³

During 1992, U.S. efforts at regionalizing the CD effort gained new ground and Ecuadorian-Colombian economic integration was finally achieved. Unfortunately, troublesome border issues between Ecuador and Colombia relating to guerrillas and narcotraffickers continued to be an irritant between the neighbors.

In February, 1992, President Bush hosted the Drug Summit in San Antonio, Texas. In addition to the original Andean CD-states (Colombia, Bolivia, and Peru), three new states--Ecuador, Venezuela, and Mexico--were also invited.³⁴ While no new, dramatic initiatives were announced during this conference, perhaps the attendance of these three new invitees reflected a more subtle message--the CD fight was becoming increasingly regional.

The U.S. military, through the unified command of SOUTHCOM (Southern Command), also began to regionalize its CD effort during 1992. Although the National Security Strategy, as early as January 1988, had clearly encouraged regional CD initiatives, this operation, code named Support Justice, was the most comprehensive regional effort to date.³⁵ Under the umbrella heading of Support Justice, a regional effort to detect and interdict illicit drug shipments began. This initiative was aimed, not at a single country on a bilateral basis, but at the Andean

region as a whole. Among the components of this operation were a series of U.S.-lent Ground Based Radars, to be located in Ecuador, Colombia, and Peru. These radars were manned jointly by U.S. and host nation personnel (from the respective countries) and were linked by 24-hour-a-day secure communications with one another, in an effort to detect and either launch interceptors from that same country or pass on the flight data to the neighboring country, who could then intercept the suspected narcotrafficking aircraft.³⁶

In addition to the Ground Based Radar initiative, the U.S. military began to offer regionalized CD training opportunities for Latin American military forces in 1992. Although CD training opportunities for Latin American officers and men, on an individual basis, had existed for years at U.S. military schools such as the US Army's School of the Americas, little effort had been made to develop opportunities to practice combined, regional CD training with Latin American militaries on a unit-level basis. In April 1992, however, company-size units from Ecuador and Venezuela were invited, at U.S. expense, to participate in a rotation (approximately two weeks in duration) at the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) in Fort Chaffee, Arkansas. This training experiment was recognized for dramatically improving the interoperability of the U.S. and LATAM forces, and it became an annual event, although the invited LATAM participants have varied from year-to-year.³⁷

As the U.S. was beginning to increase its emphasis on cooperation between the militaries of the Andean nations, Ecuador and Colombia were continuing to move towards greater economic integration.

In July, 1992, Ecuador and Colombia agreed to a bilateral cooperation program whose goal was to achieve electrical interconnection, crude oil transportation, fuel sales, and mining development with one another. Free trade negotiations between Ecuador and Colombia continued in August, 1992, following the inauguration of Ecuador's new president, Sixto Duran Ballen. On 11 November 1992, despite protests from some Ecuadorians fearful of being swallowed up by the larger Colombian economy, the Ecuadorian-Colombian Free Trade Zone went into effect. Finally, in December 1992, Ecuador was invited to join the Group of Three (G-3, composed of Colombia, Venezuela, and Mexico).³⁸

Despite positive movement in the U.S. effort to regionalize the CD effort and the realization of the long-awaited Free Trade Pact between Ecuador and Colombia, narcoguerrilla attempts to smuggle weapons, drugs, and generally use the Ecuadorian-Colombian border area as a sanctuary continued. In February 1992, Ecuadorian Customs officials seized a very large cocaine shipment at the border town of Tulcan. This seizure of over 3000 kilos of cocaine was apparently a Cali Cartel shipment, which was destined for the U.S., via an Ecuadorian seaport.³⁹ Next, in June 1992, the Ecuadorian National Police declared a state of alert after discovering a powerful domestic drug trafficking ring tied to the Cali Cartel. In November 1992, a dramatic attack by FARC elements on the Colombian Police station in Orito (close to the Ecuadorian-Colombian border) resulted in a major troop buildup on the border by both Colombian and Ecuadorian military forces, in an attempt to capture the narcoguerrillas, who were presumed to be trying to escape into Ecuadorian territory. The Ecuadorian and Colombian Defense

Ministers then announced a "Joint Action Accord," on 17 November 1992, in an effort to confront the narcoguerrillas operating along their common border. The need for still stricter border controls, however, was highlighted by a 1992 Colombian National Police arms seizure, which contained antitank missiles, rifles, and ammunition. Although Colombian authorities believed that this arms shipment had been shipped from Nicaragua, then via Ecuador to Colombia, the embarrassed Ecuadorian Defense Minister insisted that the arms had not passed through his country.⁴⁰

The last two years (1993-94) have witnessed the continuation of the trends of increased U.S. emphasis on regionalizing the CD effort, continued integration of the Ecuadorian and Colombian economies, and rising narcoguerrilla threats along the common Ecuadorian-Colombian border.

The U.S. DOD initiatives during this period were the most focused effort at "regionalizing" the CD fight yet. By early 1993, the Ground Based Radars, proposed under Operation Support Justice, were all in place and functioning in Ecuador, Colombia, and Peru. During May 1993, a large Ecuadorian Army contingent (approximately 275 men), joined Venezuelan and El Salvadoran Army units in another JRTC rotation in the U.S.⁴¹

Another major SOUTHCOM initiative, designed to improve the cooperation of Ecuadorian military and police forces with their Colombian counterparts, occurred by means of a U.S.-sponsored CD Conference in Quito, Ecuador, in September 1993. This conference was attended by general officers, and important civilian leaders from all

three countries, and, according to General Barry McCaffrey's testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee in early 1994, succeeded in strengthening the relationships and improved the overall cooperation between these two countries.⁴²

A follow-up to this successful tri-lateral Quito CD conference was the *Fuerzas Unidas* Ecuador exercise in June 1994. In an effort to develop practical applications for the high-level agreements developed at the original conference, this *Fuerzas Unidas* exercise deployed U.S. Army Special Forces personnel to nine different border sites in both Ecuador and Colombia to facilitate a communications/interoperability exercise between the military and police forces of both countries. Similar to the conference that preceded it, this initiative was considered worthwhile by all parties, and contributed to an improved interoperability capability between Ecuadorian and Colombian military and police forces.⁴³

The third annual LATAM JRTC rotation took place in September 1994, and for the first time saw the participation of both Ecuadorian and Colombian forces. Over 150 men from each country deployed, once again at U.S. expense, to both Panama and the JRTC, now located in Fort Polk, Louisiana, to participate in combined CD training with U.S. forces. A new aspect to this year's exercise was that the overall Task Force Commander was not a U.S. officer. During the 1994 JRTC rotation, code named Task Force Simon Bolivar, all three countries' forces served under the operational control of an Ecuadorian Colonel, who was supported by a combined staff comprised of officers/NCOs from all three nations.⁴⁴

The new regional military emphasis within SOUTHCOM was not just limited to land forces. In the fall of 1994, the annual U.S. Navy exercise UNITAS also brought Ecuadorian and Colombian forces together. Although UNITAS is normally conducted on a bilateral basis, this year's version saw the Colombian Navy's Pacific Fleet Commander come to Ecuador to observe the Ecuadorian portion of the exercise with the U.S. Navy. During this Ecuadorian phase, the crews of two Colombian vessels, which had arrived to escort the U.S. Navy vessels into Colombian waters, participated with U.S. and Ecuadorian sailors in conducting a series of Humanitarian-Civic Action projects along the Ecuadorian coast. Following the Ecuadorian phase, several Ecuadorian naval vessels, with U.S. financial support, then proceeded with the U.S. Navy forces to Colombia, where they then engaged in interoperability exercises involving the navies of all three countries.⁴⁵

The Ecuadorian-Colombian economic integration has thrived over the past two years. By mid-1993, the six-month trade total between Ecuador and Colombia had already doubled the trade figures for the same period in 1992. In August 1993, the Ecuadorian and Colombian Foreign Ministers signed seven more bilateral agreements designed to "strengthen the trade and integration process." By September 1993, Ecuador, Colombia, and Venezuela agreed to form an agricultural block in order to negotiate as a single entity. Additionally, the U.S. Congress' approval of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in late 1993, also received strong support from both Ecuador and Colombia, who expressed hope that NAFTA would eventually grow to include all the Americas.⁴⁶

The success of the Ecuadorian-Colombia Free Trade Pact continued to be demonstrated by the significantly improved economic indicators in 1994. Figures released in April 1994 revealed that Ecuadorian exports to Colombia more than tripled between 1991 and 1993. Similarly, Colombian exports to Ecuador jumped significantly, especially between 1993 and 1994. The economic integration of these two countries was clearly a benefit to both countries, and showed no sign of retrenchment.⁴⁷

Events within Ecuador and Colombia over the last two years suggest that, despite improved regional CD training and enhanced economic integration, the drug traffickers still pose a threat to these positive developments. In Ecuador, 1993 witnessed several effective CD Operations, such as Green Gold, and a separate cocaine seizure in Guayaquil, valued at approximately \$7 million USD. In December 1993, a devastating ambush by 200 narcoguerrillas, against a U.S.-sponsored Ecuadorian Army and National Police riverine CD patrol, left 21 Ecuadorians dead or wounded. In February 1994, Ecuadorian police seized 372 kilos of cocaine during Operation Victory in Guayaquil. These drug-related developments reflected both the significant governmental CD efforts and the strength and resiliency of the narco threat to Ecuador's stability.⁴⁸

Colombia's seemingly unending CD fight continued unabated through these last two years. In addition to their considerable domestic CD challenges, however, the Colombian authorities also assisted their Ecuadorian neighbors in March 1993, by arresting and permitting the extradition to the U.S. of the brother of Ecuador's most famous

narcotrafficker Jorge Reyes Torres. Additionally, Colombian military units rapidly deployed in support of Ecuadorian military and police units that had suffered the tragic December 1993 ambush conducted by FARC guerrillas along the international boundary.⁴⁹

The drug scourge that has swept across our hemisphere over the last two decades has dramatically altered the nature of the relations among the U.S., Ecuador, and Colombia. Although some of the initial reactions to the narcotrafficking menace involved denials of responsibility and some degree of indifference to the plight of the other states, these three nations have learned that an international response is required to effectively combat an international narcotrafficking threat. The acceptance by the U.S. of its responsibility for much of the demand that has fueled the international drug trade, along with increased U.S. funding for the CD efforts of Ecuador and Colombia, has significantly strengthened the U.S.-Ecuadorian and U.S.-Colombian bilateral relationships during this period. Additionally, these U.S. CD initiatives have had a major positive impact on the historical Ecuadorian-Colombian bilateral relationship. The next chapter will analyze the ways in which these U.S. CD efforts have affected the traditional diplomatic, economic, and military relationships between Ecuador and Colombia.

Endnotes

¹Chris-Ellen Johansen, Cocaine--The New Epidemic (New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1986), 19, 30, 48, 52, 54, 56, 57. (The data presented in this paragraph derives from Johansen as cited.)

²Department of the Army, Colombia--A Country Study (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1990), 50, 129.

³Ibid., xxvii, 52, 53, 209, 308.

⁴Department of the Army, Ecuador--A Country Study, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1991), 243. However, military rule in Bolivia under Garcia Moza in 1980 was essentially a narcodictadora regime.

⁵Johansen, 58-61.

⁶Johnathan Hartlyn, ed., The United States and Latin America in the 1990s (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 226.

⁷Colombia Country Study, 129; and Johansen, 34, 60; Robert Wesson, ed., U.S. Influence in Latin America in the 1980s (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1982), 106; Hartlyn, 216, 222; Donald J. Mabry, The Latin American Narcotics Trade and U.S. National Security (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1980), 47; and National Geographic, Volume 175, No. 1, January 1989, 34.

⁸Ecuador Country Study, 243, 244.

⁹Colombia Country Study, xxvii, 226, 242 308-309; and National Geographic, Volume 175, No.1, January 1989, 45.

¹⁰Hartlyn, 224, 229; and Mabry, 76.

¹¹Hartlyn, 216, 227, 230; and Mabry 43, 51, 52, 56.

¹²Latin American Foreign Broadcasting Service (FBIS), 10 September 1985, F-6; 8 Jan 1986, J-5; and 20 Feb 1986, J-4.

¹³LATAM FBIS, 3 Feb 1987, G-1.

¹⁴Colombia Country Study, 244.

¹⁵LATAM FBIS, 15 December 1986, F-1; 16 December 1986, H-1; Colombia Country Study, xxvii.

¹⁶Colombia Country Study, 309.

¹⁷Colombia Country Study, xxvii, xxxi, 209.

¹⁸LATAM FBIS, 22 June 1989, 39; 23 August 1989, 34; 31 August 1989, 35; 19 September 1989, 66-67; and 22 September 1989, 32.

¹⁹1989 National Drug Control Strategy, 60.

²⁰Hartlyn, 231. The actual written document signed by Secretary Cheney, which described the expanded Department of Defense role in the U.S. Counter-Drug effort, was dated 18 September 1989.

²¹Hartlyn, 231.

²²LATAM FBIS, 31 August 1989, 30; 9 November 1989, 39; and 20 December 1989, 52.

²³LATAM FBIS, 29 September 1989, 26-27.

²⁴LATAM FBIS, 16 February 1990, 2, 3, 4; and Hartlyn, 231.

²⁵LATAM FBIS, 16 January 1990, 64.

²⁶Hartlyn, 51, 54; and LATAM FBIS, 26 July 1990, 40.

²⁷U.S. International Trade Commission, Annual Report on the Impact of the Andean Trade Preference Act on U.S. Industries and Consumers and on Drug Crop Eradication and Crop Substitution (Washington, D.C.: USITC Publication 2814, 1994) 3, 7.

²⁸Hartlyn, 176, 180.

²⁹LATAM FBIS, 2 October 1990, 35; and Hartlyn, 146.

³⁰LATAM FBIS, 3 July 1985, F-1; and 13 September 1990, 25; and 21 October 1988, 25; and 19 November 1990, 1.

³¹LATAM FBIS, 29 May 1990, 55; 19 October 1990, 28; and 15 November 1990, 33; and 12 October 1990, 27. The term "narcoguerrillas," refers to an increasingly accepted belief that there exists a developing relationship between some formerly distinct narcotrafficking and insurgent organizations in Latin America.

³²LATAM FBIS, 26 February 1991, 37; 27 June 1991, 28; and 16 September 1991, 38.

³³LATAM FBIS, 23 August 1991, 42-3; and 27 August 1991, 41-2; and 10 September 1991, 38.

³⁴Hartlyn, 234.

³⁵1988 National Security Strategy, 26.

³⁶Telephonic interview on 26 January 1995 with LTC Bruce Yost, Army Section Chief, U.S. Military Group, Ecuador (1992-1994); and LATAM FBIS, 13 January 1992, 45.

³⁷From April 1991 to August 1992, I was assigned as the Assistant S-3 of the 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) and participated in the planning and execution of this LATAM JRTC event.

³⁸LATAM FBIS, 31 July 1992, 38; 24 August 1992, 42; 23 September 1992, 42-43; 5 October 1992, 34; 13 November 1992, 36; and 8 December 1992, 42. According to an interview on 20 December 1994 with Mr. David Nolan, Economic Section, U.S. Embassy, Ecuador is currently an observer-member of the G-3.

³⁹Interview on 23 December 1994, with a Drug Enforcement Administration Agent assigned to the DEA Office in Quito, Ecuador.

⁴⁰LATAM FBIS, 30 June 1992, 22-23; 10 November 1992, 31; 13 November 1992, 36; 20 November 1992, 48; 16 December 1992, 35; and 221 December 1992, 33.

⁴¹Telephonic interview on 26 January 1995 with LTC Bruce Yost.

⁴²Interview with LTC (Ret) Michael Patterson on 28 November 1994, and CINC, SOUTHCOM Testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee on 2 March 1994.

⁴³Interview with MG Walter Validvieso, J-2 (Intelligence), Ecuadorian Armed Forces (JCS equivalent) on 21 December 1994; and After Action Report, 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne), Subject: Fuerzas Unidas 94, 11 July 1994.

⁴⁴Interview on 20 December 1994 LTC Gilberto Perez, Army Section Chief, U.S. Military Group, Ecuador.

⁴⁵Telephonic interview on 7 December 1994 with COL Walter Loendorf, Defense Attache, Ecuador; and interview on 20 December 1994 with CAPT (USN) William Hunt, Navy Attache, Ecuador.

⁴⁶LATAM FBIS, 24 August 1993, 39; 30 August 1993, 52; 5 October 1993, 2; and 19 November 1993, 23-4.

⁴⁷LATAM FBIS, 15 April 1994, 56-77.

⁴⁸LATAM FBIS, 21 September 1993, 44; 1 November 1993, 44; 12 November 1993, 49; and 20 December 1993, 50, 52; 27 December 1993, 48; 22 February 1994, 54.

⁴⁹Interview on 21 December 1994 with Mr. Federico Villareal, Drug Enforcement Administration Country Attache, Ecuador; and LATAM FBIS, 10 March 1993, 27; and telephonic interview on 26 January 1995, with LTC Bruce Yost.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS

The previous three chapters have identified the study's overall topic, discussed sources of information relating to the subject, described the methodology by which the study would evaluate its principal hypothesis, and reviewed the historical events which contributed to the current state of U.S.-Ecuadorian-Colombian relations. This chapter will seek to evaluate the stated hypothesis by means of comparing the components of the study's hypothesis against the evidence which the study has uncovered. The basic elements of the hypothesis (diplomatic, economic, and military interactions between Ecuador and Colombia) will be the primary focus of this evaluation. The result of this comparison will serve to disprove, support, or suggest that the hypothesis has had no apparent bearing on the state of Ecuadorian-Colombian relations.

Diplomatic. The diplomatic relations between Ecuador and Colombia have traditionally reflected a high-degree of cooperation and shared mutual interests. The events of the last twenty years have, however, at times tested these strong bonds of friendship. The challenges relating to narcotrafficking and narcoguerrillas, particularly along their international border, have occasionally led to increased tensions between these two neighbors. Nevertheless, the traditionally strong diplomatic relations between these two states have

continued at levels equal to, or slightly better than, their established levels prior to the rise of the narcotrafficking threat.

The "special" nature of the Ecuadorian-Colombian diplomatic relationship has thrived ever since they were both ruled by Spain during their respective colonial periods. Although temporarily united under Gran Colombia following their wars of independence, these two countries eventually separated, though without bloodshed, to establish themselves as independent states. Despite their separate identities, Ecuador and Colombia continued to closely collaborate on such diverse matters as a common defense against the perceived threat of Peru and an agreement to respect the internal affairs of one another, especially during the period of civil strife between the Conservative and Liberal forces within each country around the turn of the nineteenth century. During this century, their diplomatic ties remained close as they joined the Allied cause during both World Wars, were prepared to close ranks in the face of Peruvian aggression during the Leticia crisis of 1932, and maintained a largely united front on important issues while avoiding any significant diplomatic crises.

The criteria to disprove the diplomatic element of the overall hypothesis, which states that recent U.S.-sponsored CD efforts served to improve the Ecuadorian-Colombian diplomatic relationship, range from a total break in diplomatic relations (with the distinct possibility of war) to an increase in diplomatic notes, public disagreements, and lessening of contacts and formal agreements between the political leaders of each country. These negative criteria have not appeared to any significant degree during the recent period of U.S.-supported CD

activities. There were, of course, occasional incidents, such as the seizure by Colombian authorities of weapons and dynamite which had originated, or at least passed through, Ecuador enroute to their destinations in Colombia in 1992. Similarly, the Ecuadorian authorities often felt frustration at the ability of Colombian narcoguerrillas and narcotraffickers to repeatedly penetrate the Colombian border controls and attack Ecuadorian patrols and towns, in the case of the former, and move large quantities of illegal drugs, in the case of the latter. However, efforts made by both Ecuadorian and Colombian leaders to defuse these occasional frustrations by taking corrective actions, such as more-detailed border point inspections, have enabled Ecuador and Colombia to weather these challenges and preserve their close bonds of friendship. The absence of any significant diplomatic crises between Ecuador and Colombia during the last two decades, therefore, does not meet the criteria for disproving the diplomatic element of the study's hypothesis.

The evidence necessary to support the diplomatic element of the hypothesis require that a measurable improvement in the established levels of diplomatic relations between Ecuador and Colombia be discernable, and that these positive changes can then be linked to the U.S. CD effort of the last two decades. The criteria to support the hypothesis range from increases in the frequency of diplomatic contacts and formal bilateral agreements to an actual political integration, such as the development of a union or commonwealth relationship between the two states. While there certainly has been no political integration between Ecuador and Colombia, there has been a modest improvement in

their levels and frequency of diplomatic contacts, due at least in part to efforts made by the United States. The U.S. diplomatic actions to foster a united, regional approach to the narco threat were especially evident during the last decade. The 1990 Cartagena Summit reflected the "regional" approach to the CD effort as the leaders of the United States, Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia met to develop a common strategy for combatting the drug scourge affecting their respective countries. Although the exclusion of Ecuador from this conference might have led to a distancing of Ecuadorian and Colombian bilateral relations, based on a perception that Ecuador was not considered to be an important ally in the CD fight, discussions held between Secretary of State Baker and Ecuadorian President Borja in Costa Rica during this time period ensured that no Ecuadorian resentment developed as a result of not being invited to the 1990 CD Summit. The inclusion of Ecuador (as well as Mexico and Venezuela) in the 1992 San Antonio Summit reflected the increasing commitment of the U.S. to regionalizing the CD effort and provided an important, and highly visible, forum in which Ecuadorian-Colombian bilateral bonds could develop.

This developing Ecuadorian-Colombian relationship was illustrated by several recent diplomatic initiatives between the two neighbors. The establishment of the Good Neighborhood Commissions between Ecuador and Colombia, largely in response to the increased cross-border activities of the narcoguerrillas, is an example of this heightened political cooperation. These Good Neighborhood Commissions will enable Ecuador and Colombia to rapidly resolve border issues and present a more united front, in the face of narco challenges along their

common border. High-level bilateral contacts between Ecuador and Colombia, such as President Gaviria's important visit to coordinate economic and judicial cooperation programs with Ecuador in 1991, further strengthened the traditionally strong political ties between the two states. The close Ecuadorian-Colombian cooperation was also evidenced by the 1993 arrest and extradition (to the U.S.), by Colombian authorities, of the brother of Ecuador's most dangerous narcotrafficker, Jorge Reyes Torres. Most recently, the Ecuadorian support for the candidacy of former Colombian President Cesar Gaviria (who was also the U.S. favorite) for the Secretary General post within the Organization of the American States, demonstrated that the bilateral relations between Colombia and Ecuador continue to thrive.¹ The past two decades, then, have actually seen a strengthening of historically robust Ecuadorian-Colombian bilateral ties, at least partially due to U.S. diplomatic initiatives, as these two neighbors closed ranks to jointly confront the rising narcotrafficker threat which challenged their two states.

The third possible outcome in evaluating the diplomatic element of the hypothesis is that there was no appreciable movement in the Ecuadorian-Colombian diplomatic relationship as a result of the U.S.-led CD effort. Some indicators which would suggest that this is the case would be a relatively stagnant bilateral environment, in which no new initiatives are developed to improve the relationship, but in which neither are any new actions taken to harm the established relationship. The current Ecuadorian-Colombian bilateral relationship does not appear to meet this criteria since there have been a number of actions (some described

above) taken by both states to strengthen both the frequency and scope of their political ties.

The diplomatic element of the Ecuadorian-Colombian relationship has improved slightly over the course of the U.S.-sponsored CD effort. The criteria for disproving the hypothesis (e.g., a significant worsening of bilateral relations) have obviously not been met and there is evidence of a considerable movement toward closer political cooperation, as evidenced by actions such as the establishment of the Good Neighborhood Commissions and cooperation on international judicial issues. Perhaps the most important result of this moderate improvement in the diplomatic relations between Ecuador and Colombia, however, has been its effect as an "enabler," by which much more dramatic improvements in the bilateral economic and military arena could then occur, since the existing diplomatic conditions permitted greater freedom of action in these areas.

Economic. Since the Spanish colonial period, the economies of Ecuador and Colombia were, to a large degree, oriented toward trade with markets far from South America. The trade interests of Ecuador and Colombia were generally much more concerned with economic relations with Spain, and later Great Britain and the U.S., than they were with even their own neighbors. Following World War II, however, the Latin American nations, to include Ecuador and Colombia, began to take the first tentative steps toward greater economic cooperation and integration of their own economies--perhaps in an effort to emulate the success of the European Economic Community. By the 1970s and 1980s, both Ecuador and Colombia were slowly moving toward an eventual economic

integration, as part of the overall Andean Common Market (ANCOM) integration process. The U.S. proposal of several CD economic initiatives during the last five years, however, added new urgency to these Ecuadorian-Colombian economic integration efforts by making it in the best interests of these two states (and other Andean Ridge nations, as well) to complete the integration process as rapidly as possible.

The criteria required to disprove the economic element of the hypothesis include any decrease in the levels of trade or degree of integration between the economies of Ecuador and Colombia over the last two decades. During this recent period, the economies of Ecuador and Colombia continued to move toward full integration during the 1980s, and this goal was finally accomplished in November 1992. This economic integration removed virtually all trade barriers between the two states and led to a sharp increase in Ecuadorian-Colombian trade. Therefore, the disproving of this portion of the hypothesis is not possible since the required criteria were not met.

The economic criteria required to support the hypothesis consist of heightened levels of bilateral trade, increased degrees of joint economic ventures, and in the optimal case, full economic integration. The series of events involving the strengthening of the economic ties between Ecuador and Colombia during the last half-decade certainly seem to meet these criteria. In addition to the realization of the decades-old objective of complete economic integration (and the accompanying skyrocketing trade increases between the two economies), a number of bilateral cooperation projects, such as electrical interconnectivity and crude oil transportation were also agreed to by

Ecuador and Colombia during this period. A principal cause for these rapid advances in the economic integration of Ecuador and Colombia were two U.S. economic initiatives: the Andean Trade Preference Act (ATPA), and, to a lesser extent, the Enterprise for the Americas Initiative. The effect of these Bush Administration initiatives was to create an incentive for Latin American economies to integrate, and ideally, to prosper. In the case of the ATPA, the Rules of Origin were relaxed so that instead of requiring a single country to add a total value-added percentage of 35% to a product single-handedly in order to gain U.S. duty-free status, the entire Andean Ridge group of nations (Ecuador, Colombia, Bolivia, and Peru) together were permitted to pool their efforts in the most efficient method possible that would allow them to meet the 35% requirement as a group, while still enjoying the U.S. duty-free exemption on the product. The incentive to remove their own internal trade barriers in order to take advantage of this economic opportunity was not lost on the Andean states of Ecuador and Colombia, who expeditiously completed their economic integration process, largely due to these U.S. CD economic initiatives. The following tables illustrate recent trends in Andean Pact and Ecuadorian-Colombian trade relations.

This first table, Overall Andean Group Internal Trade, illustrates the phenomenal growth which has occurred in trade among the Andean Group members over the last decade, and particularly the last few years. The almost doubling of Andean internal trade from 1991 to 1993 is especially noteworthy, since it was during this period that President Bush's Enterprise of the Americas and Andean Trade Preference Act

initiatives were enacted. The free trade incentives contained within these measures (e.g., more liberal Rules of Origin) clearly encouraged the rise in internal Andean Group trade, and contributed to the dramatic increases in the Andean Group trade figures.

TABLE 1

OVERALL ANDEAN GROUP INTERNAL TRADE (Billions of USD)

1986 -	\$728,000,000	1991 -	\$1,500,000,000
1988 -	\$1,629,000,000	1992 -	\$2,030,000,000
1990 -	\$1,500,000,000	1993 -	\$2,900,000,000

Sources: Data derived from Economic Intelligence Unit Country Report Profiles (1990-1993).

Table 2, Ecuadorian Exports to Colombia, illustrates the impressive increases in trade levels between Ecuador and Colombia since the 1980s. The rise in bilateral trade is particularly pronounced from 1992 to the present, which was the period in which the Ecuadorian-Colombian Free Trade Zone went into effect. The doubling of Ecuadorian exports to Colombia from 1992 to 1993, and continued rise in the Jan-Aug 1994 figures reflect the greatly increased volume of products produced in Ecuador and destined for the Colombian market.

The third table, Ecuadorian Imports from Colombia, demonstrates that although the level of Ecuadorian imports of Colombian products remained relatively stable from 1992 to 1993, the partial trade figures for 1994 (Jan-Jun) confirm that large increases in Ecuadorian imports of Colombian products are currently occurring. The overall 1994 figures will likely dwarf those of 1993.

TABLE 2

ECUADORIAN EXPORTS TO COLOMBIA (FOB) -USD

1986 - \$30,000,000	1991 - \$34,000,000
1987 - \$35,600,000	1992 - \$62,900,000
1988 - \$43,500,000	1993 - \$129,600,000
1989 - \$41,500,000	Jan-Aug 1993 - \$76,800,000
1990 - \$32,200,000	Jan-Aug 1994 - \$117,700,000

Sources: Data from 1986-1991 derived from Statistical Yearbook for Latin America; data 1992-1994 derived from U.S. Embassy-Ecuador, Economic Section.

TABLE 3

ECUADORIAN IMPORTS FROM COLOMBIA (CIF) -USD

1986 - \$45,800,000	1991 - \$94,500,000
1987 - \$43,300,000	1992 - \$96,300,000
1988 - \$34,800,000	1993 - \$95,500,000
1989 - \$49,000,000	Jan-Jun 93 - \$19,800,000
1990 - \$57,400,000	Jan-Jun 94 - \$118,900,000

Sources: Data from U.S. Embassy-Ecuador, Economic Section.

Obviously, the economic incentives contained in the U.S. economic initiatives contributed to greater trade interaction between the Andean Group as a whole, and these two nations in particular, as evidenced by the significant rise in both Andean Group and Ecuador-Colombia trade since 1991.

The criteria for dismissing the economic portion of the hypothesis as having not had any effect on the bilateral economic relations between Ecuador and Colombia were a lack of activity, either positive or negative, within their established economic relationship. Clearly, this criteria was not met--the successful achievement of

Ecuadorian-Colombian economic integration in 1992 was an unprecedented action which effectively changed their economies from two, distinct entities, into a much larger mutually-dependent one.

The evaluation of the criteria to determine the validity of the economic portion of the hypothesis leads to the conclusion that U.S. CD initiatives, in particular the Enterprise of the Americas and Andean Trade Preference Act, have played a critical part in the enhancement of the traditional Ecuadorian-Colombian economic relationship. The criteria for disproving the economic element of the hypothesis, namely a disruption or decrease in the level of established Ecuadorian-Colombian economic activity, was not seen during this period of historic integration and growth between the two economies. Likewise, the criteria for discounting the hypothesis as not relevant to the economic relationship of Ecuador and Colombia, consisting of the lack of any significant economic movement between the two states, was not met either. The great strides toward full economic integration that Ecuador and Colombia have made, however, largely due to the U.S.-provided economic incentives of the early 1990s, strongly supports the economic element of the hypothesis.

Military. The militaries of Ecuador and Colombia have maintained friendly, yet generally disengaged, relations with one another for virtually all of their histories. Ecuadorians and Colombians fought side-by-side during their Wars of Independence, and Colombian forces (fighting as part of Gran Colombia) were critical to repulsing a Peruvian invasion force from Ecuador in 1829, but these two military forces never again had occasion to actually fight a common

enemy (although each joined the U.S. effort in both World War One and Two, neither nation saw actual combat). During several threatened Peruvian invasions, Colombia and Ecuador closed-ranks and agreed to support one another, but these pledges were never put to the test, except for the 1941 Peruvian invasion of Ecuador, in which Colombia did not act. Nevertheless, the Ecuadorian and Colombian military forces maintained cordial relations along their common border, which was not heavily garrisoned. Occasional combined operations took place, such as the 1985-1986 Condor Operations, but these were the exception, rather than the rule, in terms of the degree of interoperability that these forces had achieved along their common border. During the late 1980s and into the 1990s, the military forces of Ecuador and Colombia also supported one another by responding to narcoguerrilla attacks against the neighbor's forces, but these efforts, while positive, were largely ineffective since they were generally reactive in nature. Recent U.S. military CD initiatives, however, have reversed this trend of "reactive" Ecuadorian-Colombian military relations and have positively affected the traditional levels of Ecuadorian-Colombian military relations.

The criteria required to disprove the military element of the hypothesis range from a retreat by Ecuadorian and Colombian forces from their traditionally warm military relations to an outright state of military tension or mobilization along the border. Despite increased narcotrafficker and narcoguerrilla pressure and provocations along the international border, the Ecuadorian and Colombian militaries have responded to these incidents by cooperating against a perceived common threat. Some of the earlier efforts at this cooperation, such as the

Condor Operations, were primarily driven by the leaders within Ecuador and Colombia, although certainly supported by the United States. More recently, however, the U.S. military has played a dynamic role in greatly increasing the degree and scope of Ecuadorian and Colombian military interaction. The fact that Ecuadorian and Colombian military forces are today on very friendly terms, due at least in part to U.S. initiatives, indicates that the military element of the study's hypothesis can not be disproved at the present time.

The criteria required to support the military portion of the hypothesis is that an increase in the level of military cooperation and interoperability, resulting from U.S. CD initiatives, can be observed between the armed forces of Ecuador and Colombia. The last few years have witnessed significant improvements in Ecuadorian and Colombian military relations--largely due to U.S. efforts in this area. While early U.S. support to the military forces of Ecuador and Colombia, such as the 1980 U.S-Colombian Operation *Tiburón* and the 1985 loan of U.S. helicopters to assist Ecuadorian CD operations, were often conducted on a bilateral basis, more recent U.S. support has occurred within a tri-lateral (U.S.-Ecuador-Colombia) framework. The September 1993 SOUTHCOM-sponsored CD conference, which took place in both Quito and Bogota, and was attended by key military and civilian leaders from all three countries, succeeded in developing a common strategic perspective and greater governmental support for future operational and tactical operations and training activities between the military forces of Ecuador and Colombia. Unlike earlier SOUTHCOM-sponsored *Fuerzas Unidas* exercises, in which U.S. forces would train with only one host nation at

a time, this conference (to include the computer-assisted CD wargame phase) was designed specifically to engage the neighboring forces in dialogue--in an attempt to improve the interoperability of the two forces along their shared border.

Subsequent to this U.S.-sponsored CD meeting, innovative training opportunities which brought Ecuadorian and Colombian ground forces together in the U.S. and Panama (known as enhanced JRTC rotations), as well as along the contested border area (*Fuerzas Unidas-94*) contributed to the institutionalizing of these improving military-to-military relations between Ecuador and Colombia. These exercises, which were funded and facilitated by U.S. military forces, provided an opportunity to the military forces of Ecuador and Colombia to put into practice the broad concepts that had been agreed to at the high-level conference the year before. While the *Fuerzas Unidas-94* exercise concentrated on communications capabilities improvement and border cooperation issues between the two forces, the JRTC rotation provided an invaluable opportunity for the military staffs of all three nations to function as part of an integrated, multi-national staff. The significant improvements in bilateral military communications, coordinated crisis response along the border area, and combined staff procedures developed during these exercises clearly enhanced the overall interoperability of the Ecuadorian and Colombian armed forces.

In addition to these predominantly U.S. Army CD initiatives, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Navy have also contributed to improving the Ecuadorian-Colombian military relationship. The introduction of the U.S.-lent Ground Based Radars, with their sophisticated communications

support, also created a greater degree of interaction and communication between the Air Forces of both countries. Most recently, the U.S. Navy-sponsored UNITAS naval exercise broke new ground by means of what amounted to a tri-lateral navy exercise, which took place in both Ecuador and Colombia in late 1994. The UNITAS exercise served as an excellent opportunity for the U.S. Navy to bring Ecuadorian and Colombian naval forces together and facilitate an exchange of information, tactics, and ultimately improve the level of interoperability between the two neighbors. Undoubtedly, these recent U.S. military initiatives have played an important role in enhancing the current Ecuadorian-Colombian military relationship.

The criteria required to determine that the recent U.S. CD initiatives have had a negligible effect on the bilateral military relations between Ecuador and Colombia are indications of stagnation in the overall military relationship between the two. The significant improvement in the frequency and nature of the Ecuadorian-Colombian military contacts over recent years, makes the meeting of this criteria impossible.

The effect of the U.S.-sponsored CD effort on the military relations between the armed forces of Ecuador and Colombia has certainly been a positive one. There has been absolutely no deterioration of the levels of military cooperation and interoperability between these two nations over the last decade. On the contrary, the militaries of Ecuador and Colombia, thanks in large part to U.S. initiatives, are perhaps closer than they have been since they jointly achieved their independence from Spain in the early nineteenth century.

Conclusion. The overall frequency and quality of positive bilateral relations between Ecuador and Colombia is much higher today than it was prior to the initiation of the U.S.-sponsored Drug War. Some of the conditions which enabled this enhanced bilateral relationship, such as historically warm diplomatic ties and an established trend of economic integration, were present long before the entry of the U.S. CD effort into the equation. This recent U.S. regional CD effort, though, acted as a catalyst, by which these established conditions gave way to still greater levels of bilateral cooperation in the fields of diplomacy, economic integration, and military cooperation. While some or all of these bilateral accomplishments might have occurred eventually, there is little doubt that the U.S. CD effort has energized this process and radically improved the character of Ecuadorian-Colombian bilateral relations.

Implications for Future Research. The current state of Ecuadorian-Colombian bilateral relations, though quite warm, may not necessarily remain that way in the future. The current Ecuadorian-Peruvian border dispute and continued, long-term U.S. resolve to support Latin American CD efforts are two areas which have the potential to strain this "special" Ecuadorian-Colombian relationship.

The recent border conflict between Ecuador and Peru may harm the existing Ecuadorian-Colombian relationship. Colombia, already fully occupied with its internal narcotrafficking, narcoterrorist, and guerrilla problems and also sharing a common border with Peru, was noticeably reserved in its support for Ecuador during the hostilities. As the peace process between Ecuador and Peru continues, the Rio

Protocol nations of the United States, Brazil, Chile, and Argentina are actively working (to include placing peacekeeping troops along the disputed border area) toward establishing a lasting peace in the disputed region. The absence of meaningful Colombian participation in either the combat and peacekeeping phases of this recent Ecuadorian crisis may result in a lessening of the historically strong fraternal relationship between these two nations, as Ecuadorians might perceive the Colombians as not being responsive to their needs. Likewise, the renewed Ecuadorian focus on the conventional threat to the south, which is likely to last for some time, may also make it more difficult for Ecuador to maintain the recent high levels of participation with Colombia in CD operations along the northern border. Should a Colombian narcoguerrilla border sanctuary develop inside Ecuador, as a result of a vacuum created by the refocused Ecuadorian forces, Colombians might well resent the lack of Ecuadorian cooperation, and bilateral relations could suffer as a result. Therefore, the potential exists that the strong ties between Ecuador and Colombia might be jeopardized by the current Ecuadorian-Peruvian conflict, and more importantly, the way in which Ecuadorians and Colombians perceive each other's response to this issue in the future.

Another potential source of strain on the bilateral relationship between Ecuador and Colombia is the degree of future CD support from the United States. If, due to fiscal constraints or re-directed priorities (e.g., domestic demand-reduction vice source/transit country emphasis), the U.S. reduces its efforts at providing CD assistance to these two nations, a corresponding reduction in the

enhanced Ecuadorian-Colombian relationship might also occur. In the absence of U.S. economic incentives, such as the Andean Trade Preference Act, the economies of Ecuador and Colombia would likely see some decline in their bilateral trade, as the artificial incentives would no longer exist. A cutback in U.S. CD funding might also lead to a distancing of the armed forces of Ecuador and Colombia, should SOUTHCOM find itself unable to continue the wide-variety of conferences, exercises, and other activities which have contributed to the heightened levels of cooperation and improved interoperability between the two forces.

Perhaps neither of these negative scenarios regarding the future of Ecuadorian-Colombian bilateral relations will actually occur in the future. If Colombia and Ecuador respond in a mutually supportive way to the unique pressures that each faces during the on-going border conflict, and sustained U.S. CD support is made available, the Ecuadorian-Colombian relationship may actually improve in the future. Nevertheless, the ongoing developments in both Latin America and the United States suggest that it might well be advisable to evaluate what, if any, affect the 1995 Ecuadorian-Peruvian border conflict and potentially reduced U.S. CD effort may have on the future of Ecuadorian-Colombian relations.

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